

LONDON SOCIETY.

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A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

CHAPTER I.

A PAINFUL conviction had been growing upon me for a long time that it was my probable destiny, within an easily calculable period, to be 'hard up.' Hitherto I had only been acquainted with such a condition of things as a matter of pure theory. The world had seemed to me an elaborate system of contrivances whereby all my wants had been diligently ministered to, much to my own personal gratification. When I had attained my majority, which happened at the time I obtained my degree, my guardians insisted on my going through the form of closing their accounts and bringing all matters between us to a termination. I am afraid I had given them my share of trouble, and that they had considered me an extravagant and an unhopeful subject. I had done very well at a great public school, but at Cambridge I had done absolutely nothing; and I am afraid that the master of the college, who was a cousin of one of my guardians, had reported, and only with too much justice, unfavourably of my pursuits and prospects. We had a meeting in the West-end office of the family solicitor; all accounts were gone through; a balance,

considerably below my expectations, was still due to me; it was deposited in my name in a London bank, and a cheque-book was considerably handed over to me. Although my balance was smaller than I expected the leavings of my inheritance would be, it was still larger than anything which I had hitherto manipulated; and I expected that I should derive a good deal of enjoyment from its sporadic dispersion. In order to assist this object I removed from Cambridge to London, where I had been lately made member of a very fair club, more social than political, and took modest apartments in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall. The whole arrangement was modest, though hardly practicable for one of small and rapidly decreasing means. I wrote out cheques with startling rapidity, and wondered at the power of those little white slips of paper in commanding the respect and even the subserviency of mankind. My club presented the phenomenon, so usual at the present day, of an immense number of young men being members; and it was almost a tacit point of honour among us we should have our diurnal champagne and feast on the best. Accordingly when my banker's book was last made up, considerably to

my dissatisfaction, in the height of a London season, one midsummer day, I perceived with a sigh that the Dr. side was crowded, and that the Cr. side, beyond the original sum paid in, presented a perfect blank. My possessions had attenuated to the entry of two hundred pounds; and as it was an understanding with the bank that my account should not go below a hundred, there remained to me that sum precisely, with the solitary good point about it that it was free from debt. Under such circumstances the melancholy conviction deepened on me that at no distant date I should be hard up.

One day I had gone into a little French café. It was a clean quiet little place, doing a modest business among humble people; but the proprietors understood cooking, and were doing things remarkably cheap and well. It was the autumn of the year, and things were very dull in the newspapers; and perhaps that was the reason why a long letter appeared in a leading morning paper, contrasting the expensive club-dinner with the equally good and inexpensive dinner at this restaurant. As I read the paper, the notion occurred to me that this was the sort of dinner which I ought to eat for the present, until affluence should by some strange chance dawn upon me again. It so happened, however, that the same notion had occurred to a lot of other fellows. The proprietor of the rooms was amazed by about a hundred gentlemen walking into the premises, each expecting a first-class dinner. The inroad was not unsuspected, and an immense number of dinners were served, though with considerable delay between the removes. As the tables thinned, I found myself sitting with a very interesting man, who like myself had been taxing

the resources of the establishment by ordering some dishes which one does not often meet with in London, but are not uncommon in Paris. What attracted me to this man was an immense pile of ponderous books belonging to the highest departments of German literature. Having done very fairly, we engaged in moralising over the vanities of the pleasures of the table.

'Yes,' said my companion, delicately spreading some pâté de foie gras over his bread, 'I am afraid the age is passing by for plain living and high thinking, which used to be the plan for the great scholars of old.'

'Yes,' I sighed deeply, sipping my Chartreuse of the Monastery, 'men now carry personal luxuries to an unwarrantable extreme. As for scholarship, I am afraid the habit of steady application has vanished; at least I never had it myself. I cannot even stand an opera, and merely drop in for my favourite airs.'

He glanced at his books, and said half apologetically, 'I think when a man has worked hard, as I have all day, that it is a pleasant revulsion to loiter for a couple of hours over a repast which at least has been distinguished by considerable variety.'

'I have not done the work, but I have enjoyed the dinner,' was my answer; 'and there are such lots of men I know who have an increasing appreciation for dinner and an increasing depreciation of work. It is wonderful how people hate work and like dining.'

'We have it on very good authority that if a man will not work, neither shall he eat.'

'I suppose so,' I said; 'but working is a great bore. It is revolting to all the finer feelings to be grinding merely for the sake of grist, like a mule on a mill, when in quiet observation and

reflection one might be elaborating a higher kind of workmanship altogether.'

'Possibly'—this was in a very quiet, perhaps sub-acid tone. He added, 'If a man goes in for plain living and high thinking, that is a very different affair altogether. You may think as high as you like, if you live as plain as you can.'

I had a little further talk with my new-found friend, telling him with a sudden confidence, which seemed a bold venture, but which rested upon an intuition of character, some little about myself. I remember very well that the sum of his remarks was a little like this :

'I am rather a rich man myself,' he said; 'and I really like to cultivate dining as one of the fine arts. But it is only one amusement out of many, and by no means one of the most refined. Many people limit the feeding altogether. Lord Byron would dine off dates and water; and I know a great nobleman who has an immense dinner daily at his house, and frequently dines off an apple.'

'You happen to say that you are rather rich; on the other hand I am particularly poor. I shall by and by have to dine on a Ribston pipkin, unless, like Mr. Micawber, something turns up.'

He looked amused. 'You are breaking yourself in very gently for your reverse. There have been a great many men in this room tonight, but you are about the last sort of man whom I should expect to use such language.'

'It will soon be all U-P with me,' spelling that expressive monosyllable.

'I don't think that need distress you. You are a little hipped. Get out of London, and have a little solitude, leisure, activity, in our broad wonderful provincial

life. In this England of ours no man like yourself need starve. With your muscular development you might in a couple of days, as collier or ironworker, earn enough to keep you as a gentleman for the rest of the week. You could live if you chose on twelve shillings a week. You laugh, but I can assure you that I have lived in remote districts where money is seldom seen by the natives, and its use is only imperfectly comprehended. Well, that is only an exaggeration, but, as the philosophers say, it is an exaggeration which contains a truth. Have you travelled much about England?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'to several of the watering-places—Cheltenham, Harrogate, Scarborough.'

'That is substantially all the same district, working in the same groove. Artificial society is distributed by the Fates in certain belts and regions of England, and you never get out of this area. You will have the same sort of people and the same high prices everywhere. Go to some ordinary shire not overrun by tourists and would-be fashionables. Wander about at your own sweet will. You will have time to clarify and mature your ideas.'

'Where had I better go, think you?'

'Go where you like. One place is very much the same as another. Open Bradshaw, and go to the first place you lay your finger on, with the proviso that it is a place you have never heard of before.'

'Still I don't exactly see, even when I have got to this outlandish country place, how I am advanced in my plans.'

'Neither do I. But I will give you one short piece of advice in the practical conduct of life. Don't take long views. One of the Port Royalist writers says that in

the morning he only looked forward to the afternoon. I don't go so far as to say that ; but take my word for it, short views are best. They open up the path to longer vistas. They open up the gambit of the game, and you trot out the pieces and see how they conduct themselves. However, I may perhaps be an empiric. I am simply telling you to do much as I have done in my own time myself, and found the benefit of it.'

Then he arose to go. As I did the same, I took out my card; and he handed me his own. I cast my eye on it and saw the name, Sir Henry Westlake,—a name which at that time was well and favourably known at times throughout the country, although I will not here specify in what path of eminence.

'It is very curious,' I thought to myself, 'this man dropping from the skies and speaking like an oracle at the very moment that I wanted something oracular. I have nothing at all to do, so I may as well do as he tells me.'

I took up *Bradshaw* in my hands. 'I will go into some unfrequented neighbourhood. I will live cheaply. I will think quietly. I will see what will turn up.' Such were my cogitations at this point. I closed my eyes and opened *Bradshaw*. I turned over several pages, and then I put down my finger on one of them, making a slight indentation with a pencil. Then I opened my eyes and glanced at the *Bradshaw*. Amesbury was marked by my pencil. 'Amesbury is henceforth linked to my destiny,' I exclaimed aloud. 'I go to meet my fate at Amesbury. Where on earth may Amesbury happen to be ?'

'Somewhere down west,' said my companion, much amused with this new kind of *sortes Virgilianæ*.

' You are sure to be in luck. I should be happy to start empty handed into the world, if I could only do so at three-and-twenty once more. Any use in asking you to dine with me at the Reform Club to-morrow ?'

'No,' I said, as we shook hands heartily. 'I have just arranged to meet the future at Amesbury.'

CHAPTER II.

AT five o'clock in the afternoon of the next day I descended from a third-class carriage on the platform of the Amesbury Station. I had never been in a third-class carriage before, and I did not coincide with a genteel passenger that the third-class was as good as the first. I had never heard of Amesbury before in all my life. Such being the case, I considered that it must be a place totally uninteresting. I thought I knew the names of all the places whither people think it worth their while to rush, and Amesbury was certainly not in the number. But I have reason to believe that all the nice places in our little island have not yet been discovered, catalogued, and labelled. I had bought *Murray's Handbook* for the county, and I had found out that for the first time I was in the propinquity of cathedral, castle, abbey, river, hills, well worth the seeing. Indeed, so rich is this England of ours, that there are not many square miles totally devoid of objects of interest. So I got out at Amesbury quite cheerfully; but as I did so my original inquiry returned, 'Where is Amesbury ?' Amesbury was not at all visible from the Amesbury railway station, and I discovered that it was a mile and a half away, a distance that might

be slightly abridged by going up a lane and through some meadows. Amesbury was on a little branch-line—of course in a hopelessly insolvent condition—and you might count up the number of daily trains on your fingers. The station-master, who was able to combine with his official duties the care of a small farm, was returning home to feed his pigs, and told me he could show me the road past Squire Gorst's house. I left my portmanteau in the open office which did duty as a cloak-room, and shouldering a knapsack I sallied forth. On the way we saw Squire Gorst's house, to which *Murray* had devoted a line and a half containing two complimentary adjectives. It was the pretty sort of house that comes out so well in photographs, having verandah, bow-window, cedars, lawn, and young ladies in book-muslin; only on this occasion the young ladies were conspicuous by their absence.

'That's Squire Gorst's,' said the station-master.

'Who might Squire Gorst happen to be?'

'Him as used to keep the hounds,' said the station-master, without any particular lucidity of expression.

The hounds were more interesting to me than the squire.

'What has become of the hounds?' I asked affectionately.

I had had something to do with hounds in my day—had hired hunters at Death's, and had gone to the field in scarlet array.

'Squire guv 'em up,' said the station-master. 'He has about guv up everything: first Parliament, then the magistrates' meeting every Monday at Amesbury Town-hall, then being director of the railway, and, last of all, the hounds. I didn't like his giving up the railway company,' added the

station-master, generously identifying himself with the original shareholders. 'But he sends me a pheasant or a brace of partridges all the same. And he has a main clever daughter, that could go either to Board or Bench or Parliament itself if she chose to go, and they chose to have her. She is a good creature, though perhaps a little masterful.'

Amesbury House looked very pretty—a big house, but still a home-like one, just escaping the being shown as a show-house, and so destroying anything like seclusion and domesticity. It had an ancestral sort of look about it :

'All things in order stored—
A haunt of ancient peace.'

I have been in millionaires' houses, where everything was bright, sharp, angular, metallic—ready-moneyish even on the first outside inspection; but there was nothing of the kind here. Squire Gorst's lines had been cast in pleasant places, even though the lines might now be beginning to run out. I am not certain that some sort of Communist's notion did not come to my mind that old squires who could no longer ride to hounds might give a mount to young knights of the Lackland order. It was evident also, by the clumps of plantations in the surrounding dewy meadows, that there would be a plenty of shooting of those pheasants and partridges whereof the honest station-master spoke. We passed two lodges which were villas in themselves, and the prosperous, well-kept, orderly appearance of things was unmistakable. The station-master might have proved a regular Andrew Fairfayre in speaking of the big houses and the gentry, only the appearance of some pigs which he identified as his own caused him to pursue practical researches on

a path opposite to that which he had indicated to me.

'I suppose you'll be sure and go on and see Beacon Point? It's about the prettiest view in all these parts, I'm thinking.'

'How far?'

'Three or four miles. There'll be a beautiful view at sunset. Lots of gentlemen have come down to paint it.'

'Those artist fellows find out every place,' I said to myself. 'I defy Bradshaw to name a place which they haven't spotted.'

So, wishing the station-master good-night, I strolled on through the pleasant lanes and fields, taking the obvious by-cuts through the meadows. There was some high ground in the distance, which obviously formed my destination. I emerged at last upon the Point. I came so suddenly upon it, I was utterly unprepared for the view that it revealed to me. I came out of a narrow path on the tallest point of a promontory that overlooked a tidal river. It was sunset, and I watched momentarily to see the disk of the sun descend into the broad water. Its last red light was on the sails of ships, on the scarred rocks, on rich timber, on rich sheaves of corn, on the delicate purple heights far away beyond the 'silver streak' of sea. The view broadened beautifully before me, not least beautifully when it became indistinct, and the haze hanging over distant mountains was helped by the imagination. Ineffably pure and sacred was the evening hour, the solitude, the calm. A denizen in cities, a mover in active life, I had hitherto strangely overlooked the rich joys that belong to scenery and solitude. The views were lovely, and I examined each view that could be gained from either side of the height.

As I reached the summit once more, I perceived that I was not so lonely as I had thought. Two ladies were reclining on a hillock, with their shawls somewhat tightened around them, on account of the freshening breeze. I suppose I am an inconsistent being; but as I had been happy in solitude, so, as soon as I saw faces, I longed for companionship. It is a feeble sort of feeling, but I am afraid we cannot excise that instinctive 'yearning' for sympathy. One of these faces was, I thought, very fair. The other had also that soft matronly beauty possessed by so many old ladies; and I took the two for mother and daughter. I sat down on a jutting rock, and carelessly addressed some remark to them. It was against all the conventionalities; but my silent day had made me hungry for talk, and, like the fishes, I was ready to nibble at sunset. So I carelessly addressed some remark to the elder lady on the suddenness and sweetness of the prospect on which one came so unexpectedly from the lower grounds.

'So you have never been to the Point before?' she asked.

I answered, No; that this was my first visit to the western shires.

'What part of England do you know and like best?'

I answered, somewhat logically, that the part I knew best was not necessarily the part I liked best.

'I had only been regretting to myself just now that I had lived so long in cities—in Cambridge and in London—and so I knew little of sweet and civil country ways, and all the beautiful scenery of the western lands.'

Cambridge and London! These are talismanic words. There is no Englishwoman to whom they are not fraught with all manner of associations. For the matter of that,

every part of England is beginning to know every other part. The railways bring all parts of the land into connection. To go from one part of England to another is now little more than to go from street to street, and from room to room.

My talk was chiefly with the old lady. The younger one said little, but said it in a musical tone that it was positive pleasure to listen to.

After we had been talking some time, with the unceremonious ease of strangers meeting at an evening party, I was somewhat shocked by a servant in a dark livery approaching, and asking whether he should bring round the carriage. I now noticed a neat carriage and pair standing under some trees at a short distance.

'Can we offer you a seat in our carriage? Are you going to Knottingley?

'I will take a seat in your carriage with pleasure,' I answered; 'but I really don't know whether I am going to Knottingley or not.'

'That's odd,' said the younger lady, with a laugh. 'But here's the carriage. Come in.'

I snatched up my *valise*, which was lying close at hand, assisted the ladies into the carriage, and followed them in.

It was certainly a new experience to me to be bowling along a pleasant macadamised road, with two fair-spoken ladies — one of them very handsome — without the slightest possible conception where we were driving to, or what was to become of me.

We had gone on very pleasantly for nearly half an hour, when the elderly lady — on whose mind the notion had probably been gaining ground that I was an escaped lunatic, who was throwing himself unsought on their hospitality

for the night — inquired, a little anxiously,

'And don't you really know what you are going to do with yourself to-night?

I hastened to explain that I was out for a holiday; that air and exercise were what I wanted; and that, these being obtained, it was a matter of extreme indifference to me as to what point of the compass they were obtained.

'But such a kind of expedition appears somewhat objectless,' said the younger lady, in a cool, quiet, criticising tone.

'Just so,' I answered.

'You mean that your present journey is without an object?'

'I don't profess to have any object at all in life.'

'No object at all in life!' she said, a little astonished. 'Surely that is a mistake, and not quite right.'

'I don't see that there is any object anywhere,' I answered. 'You have heard of Clough, the model Oriel man, perhaps. Let us quote his lines.' And I repeated the fine passage:

'O that the armies indeed were array'd!
O joy of the onset!
Sound, thou trumpet of God! Come forth,
Great Cause, to array us!
King and leader, appear; thy soldiers,
sorrowing, seek thee.
Would that the armies indeed were array'd! O where is the battle?
Neither battle I see, nor arraying, nor
king in Israel.
Only infinite jumble and mess and dislocation,
Back'd by a solemn appeal, "For God's
sake, do not stir them."

The elder lady laughed, but the younger sighed. 'It is a fine passage. I know the immortal Tobie-na-Vuolich well. But I think the lines lie open to a certain amount of criticism.'

'And what will be your criticism?'

'Well, if you will excuse my saying so,' she answered, 'I think

that there is a battle going on, and that most of you young men of the present day are very shy of taking part in it? I think that all Christians have a King and Leader, and may hear the trumpet of God if they choose to listen for it. There is always a great cause and a great battle.'

She had drawn up her veil while speaking. It was a youthful face, clear-cut features, olive complexion, brilliant eyes; only that for so young a face there was a force, a decision, a melancholy, that struck me as being a little hard, and suited rather for the elderly companion, who appeared on the other hand to be wanting in such characteristics.

'O, that's the line of argument,' I answered. 'You are of opinion that "life is real, life is earnest," and all that sort of thing. I have known several men of my time, who, after reading Carlyle, have gone about calling themselves "earnest," and I have generally noticed that they are the most affected and self-indulgent men out. Instead of reforming the universe they might reform themselves and their tailors' bills.'

'Well, Mary, you have got your answer,' said the elder of the two.

Mary!—how much, I said to myself, I should like to have known her other name! At the same time I could not help colouring. Of course my remarks might bear the character of attempting a laugh at the lady's expense. But I had fallen into the sophistical trick of answering jest with earnest, and earnest with jest.

'Tell me where we are to put you down,' said Mary.

I answered that it was a matter of perfect indifference as to where they put me down. 'I shall have a pleasant twilight walk till I get under cover somewhere.'

'Then I will put you down at the Knoll. James,' to the coachman, 'stop at the Knoll.'

'You are the most genuine specimen of a knight-errant that I have ever met with,' she continued. 'I suppose you have read Mill on *Liberty*?'

'Yes,' I answered; 'and his book on the *Subjection of Woman* too.'

'O, that's great nonsense,' she answered, colouring. 'But I think you are just the sort of young gentleman whom Mr. Mill would appreciate; a considerable dash of individuality, and if you chose, in spite of popular opinion, you would venture to be eccentric.'

'You speak,' I said, 'as wisely as if you were delineating character by the handwriting.'

'Well,' she said, 'I think there is a higher type of character than that, a type which Clough indicated in the lines you quoted, though he may have failed to import my sense into them. I try to be earnest, even at the risk of being thought affected. If I meet a stranger for once in my life, I try to speak a good word. If I were to meet him again, I postpone my good word for a more convenient time; but I don't think it at all probable that I shall ever see you again; and therefore I shall not mind giving you a clear word of advice. I think a young man ought to form a high ideal of life, and try and live up to it. I think he ought to stand apart from his life and contemplate it as a whole, and make it a work of art. When a man does that I respect him as having a spark of divinity about him; but if less, he is merely a Sadducee.'

'I am afraid I'm a Sadducee,' I answered.

Just at this moment the carriage stopped. An eminence crowned by a tuft of trees stood close by,

which I justly conceived to be the Knoll. I shook hands with the ladies and alighted. The carriage rapidly resumed its progress. I watched it until the last sounds of the wheels had died away.

'What an extraordinary young woman?' I thought to myself. 'I wonder if she drives about, preaching in the open air, or addressing public meetings on women's rights and wrongs. I can't make out the map'—and already in the gathering gloom I saw the tiny light of the glow-worm—'but I will take this right-hand road at a venture.'

The right-hand road degenerated into a lane that seemed to have no turning and no ending. I trudged and trudged till I was fairly tired. The gloom increased till I could hardly see my hand before me. At last I came to a little village, and with difficulty I detected the signboard of a humble hostel. I knocked and knocked unavailingly, until at last a light was shown in an upper window, and a rough voice bade me begone, as the place was quite full. So I journeyed on to the next village, and though I detected lights in the little inn, yet no reply was vouchsafed to my knocking. I was now exhausted by this prolonged ramble coming on the close of the long railway journey. It seemed to me to be highly probable that the first night of my bucolic pilgrimage would have to be passed under a hedge or under a haystack. That little flash of adventure had eventuated in a long tiring and sombre way; so soon do all the sparkling colours of life fade out. The rain came on later, first inizzle, then in a down-pour. However, there was luck in the third time. I came to a village of a larger sort, with an inn of the better kind. The door was at once unbarred, and never had I heard a more

grateful sound. With joy I followed into a neat well-furnished bedroom, smelling of lavender, and tempting with clean white sheets. The sheets, however, were thrown off to avoid all risk of damp, and I also had guarded myself by a warm potion against any bad effects of my wetting. So I turned in, I must acknowledge, rather tired and depressed.

I was awoke the next morning, however, by the brilliant sunshine streaming in upon my bed. I was thoroughly rested, and my sensations were those of cheerfulness and happiness. I liked my pleasant bedroom, all in the purest white dimity; I liked the purely silvan prospect which was out-stretched before my window. I went down-stairs, where ham and eggs were speedily brought to me. The table was adorned, too, with a basket of apples of Hesperian fragrance and beauty. I lounged about on a smooth-shaven lawn and in a pleasant arbour, beguiling my time with my thoughts—some of which, I confess, related to my singular interview the evening before with the two ladies—and a Tauchnitz volume, which consciously or unconsciously I had smuggled over in my last trip from Paris. Then I prepared to leave, and called for my bill, which I give as a specimen of what charges in country villages used to be a few years ago, and which vindicated Sir Henry Westlake's notion of cheapness:

	s. d.
To Bed	1 0
" Breakfast : : : : :	1 0
" Spirits	0 3
	2 3

I started again on my pilgrimage. I longed for an adventure; but adventures do not come for the asking. I had flushed one in the very outset of my journey, and it was not likely I should

have another. Still 'adventures to the adventurous,' said Disraeli. So I went along the lanes, walking leisurely, noting Nature, chewing the cud of reflection. As for noting Nature, I am afraid that I did so in a most imperfect and rudimentary way. It is astonishing what new notes of Nature you get if you happen to be walking with a poet or painter. You must study Nature a great deal before you make much out of her. My luncheon was as simple as any anchorite could desire; a few biscuits, some delicious blackberries from the hedges, and a glass of cold water, given with exquisite grace by a young cottager, sufficed. The cud of reflection was a far less pleasant repast to chew. I could hardly go through this undefined walking tour without impinging on that sacred hundred pounds. I knew of no business where so humble a capital would be able to do anything. That wretched hundred pounds, or call it two with my reserve fund, would keep cropping up with all its practical issues. But soon Nature soothed my cares with the bonny sights and sounds of country life. It was a case of *Coin and Care versus Nature and Youth*. The latter carried the day; I voted Care and Coin caddish, and, a noble animal, rejoiced in Nature.

'As the laughing streamlet sang for joy, as the trees of the field clapped their hands, my mind was merry with their mirth, and, like Alexander, I reserved for myself hope.'

So I had four or five days' walking by myself. It was something strange this being thrown so much into my own society. Here was my life, I thought to myself, and what on earth was I to do with it? One humble feeling I certainly had—the conviction of its insignificance; that it was

of no particular value to any one but the owner, and from his point of view it did not much matter what became of it. These dreadful practical questions have a trick of recurring like recurring decimals. Should I emigrate? I thought to myself. Emigration I felt was the natural outlet for young men; but I had had the superfine education that unfitted me for a kind of work of which I was quite ignorant. This idea was unwelcome, and I put it away. I think it was now for the first time that the idea was consciously presented to me—suggested to me, I imagine, by that conversation the other evening at the Point—that I ought to look at my limited human life as a whole, make it a work of art if possible, and try and put into it something like a sense of duty and aspiration that should prove a dominant theory of life ruling all the details. This idea was a novel one, something altogether new to my experience, but it somehow gave me strength and courage. I turned it over and over in my mind several times while I was wandering about in those well-remembered days of old.

CHAPTER III.

THE 'Chapter of Accidents' was unfolding itself. My next adventure came and proved a damp one. I had formed no settled plan of travel, and was striking almost at random across field and lane as any pretty prospect seemed to open before me; my general idea being that I was to jot off the places of interest mentioned by Murray. But certain things came to pass in thiswise.

I had been to see the ruins of an old castle overhanging the

river, a famous old castle that almost enabled me to realise the old baronial type which it so vividly recalled. From this castle I could see the promontory of the Point where I had been only a few evenings before with the two ladies. The old castle would have been all the pleasanter if they were still my companions ; they would 'have made a sunshine in a shady place.' A pretty little child showed me all about ; with fearless grace she ran along the narrow ledge of wall. I could see the view on the right hand expanding into a tawny estuary of the sea, and diminishing on the left almost to a thread of light in the distance. The idea came into my head that I would beat up by the side of the river until I came to some neat town or village on its shore, or to some bridge or ferry that would take me to the opposite bank.

So I went up the river-shore, mile after mile, hour after hour. The path sometimes skirted the bank which, with level spaces interspersed, preserved for a considerable distance the character of a sheer cliff. Now, as I was going along one of those level spaces, meadow-land shadowed by noble timber, a somewhat singular incident came to pass. I heard a strange, strong, sudden sound ; a sound as of rushing water — thunderous, unearthly. The noise was behind me, and I looked back in amazement to see what it might be. The river presented a singular phenomenon. There appeared to be a wall of water, almost of a man's stature, gliding onwards with the utmost velocity. I at once recollect—my ramble being about the time of the autumn Equinox—that this must be the *aeger* or bore so well-known on some parts of the coast. The appearance was

so striking, and to one previously unacquainted with it even so threatening, that I took at once to my legs, and ran rapidly so as to gain the next cliff. But before I could do so, the water had spread itself over half the meadow, and I was wet through to the knees. I quickly was out of reach ; and watching the onward rushing stream I perceived that the banks, where they did not rise to cliffs, were flooded on either side by the stream. The path that skirted the river was now untenable, and I was obliged to get into the high-road that ran parallel with the river, so far as a straight line could be parallel with a devious stream. On I went, mile after mile, hour after hour. I did not know that I was on a great ducal property, where the farm-holdings were unusually enormous ; and consequently the country-side had for leagues no collection of habitations, but was chiefly diversified by farmhouses big and stately as manor-houses. The only guide that I had was the broad white river, that still gleamed white, although the day had long since waned, and I was again benighted. At last I saw some lights gleaming on the further shore. I thought that perhaps there might be a ferry here, and I shouted and shouted in the hope of attracting attention. At last there came back an answering shout, and I heard in the darkness the clashing of a chain. Presently I heard voices, and was told to go to the steps. I went in the direction of the steps, having positively to wade through two feet of water, and discerned a wall, by which I rightly guessed the flooded steps were situated, which at a dry season went down from the bank into the river. A good-looking young fellow, smoking a cigar, was sitting in the big

ferry-boat, one so big that it served for the carriage of cattle and heavy goods, worked, though the river was broad, by a chain. When we arrived on the other side the boat was almost exactly under the projecting gables of a big house, whence were gleaming the lights of which I spoke. I soon perceived that this was a hotel called the Fisherman's Arms, into which I was very glad to get entrance, and proceeded, according to the former precedent, to obviate the bad effects of my wetting. The landlord said that there was only one sitting-room, which was rented by two gentlemen who were fishing; but he had no doubt they would let me have a share in their fire and their apartment.

When I entered, after a courteous message, I found that the fishermen were not only fishers, but also—a very different thing, as my own experience testified—had taken some fish. A large appetising dish of trout was before them; and with an easy kindness they said I had better have some with them, as there was no more in the house. One of the men was the young fellow who, cigar in mouth, had come over in the ferry-boat, apparently for the lack of something to do. I had never seen a pleasanter, more contented fellow, sunny as the sunward peach on the wall.

The elder was a different sort of man, quiet, thoughtful, intensely occupied, with an array of books and papers on the table behind him which had overflowed to the tea-table. From red tape around piles of papers I conjectured that he was a barrister taking a holiday to freshen himself up for the beginning of term. They made their headquarters at this fishing-inn, whence they had explored a good deal of the country, and had fished, not without success, in the river,

having caught several salmon with rod and line in the main river, and lots of trout in the tributary streams.

I had my own little story to tell in answer to their frank confidences. I was a stranger in this part of the country, had never been here before, and only came as a sort of whim. But I had accidentally met a clever man in London, Sir Henry Westlake, who had advised me to take this sort of pedestrian trip; and happening to have his card about me I took it up and looked at it.

'I know Sir Henry,' said the elder of my companions; 'he is a singular man, but good and clever; and once he went out of his way to do me a great kindness, though really I had no sort of claim upon him.'

This little incident broke the ice, if indeed their kind hospitality had not broken it already. We sat up till quite late at night chatting. I and the younger man had it chiefly to ourselves, until the elder cousin—for that was the connection between them—put aside his papers and went into the conversation with a vigour that atoned for his previous silence. I too was glad to find my tongue again. I had been silent and solitary for some days, and had been inclined to share the opinion of that morbid old gentleman, who declared that conversation was the bane of society. But now that society was ready-made to my hand once more, I enjoyed it as much as in the smoking-room of the club; indeed the talk was of a better quality than I think the club could have furnished.

There were just two or three days left of their holidays, and as I had nothing at all to do with my time I easily arranged that I would join them.

The young one said rather un-

expectedly, ‘When Ellis leaves me on Thursday, I am going on to Dorchester to stay with my uncle, who is one of the canons. He is a very kind old man, and will be delighted to see you at dinner on Friday or Saturday. He always tells me to bring any friend I like.’

I thought Mr. Blount was a little reckless with his invitations, and I looked inquiringly at the elder man.

‘O, you had better go,’ he said smilingly. ‘If you are looking at the county, *Murray* in hand, you ought to see something of the county people. You will have a capital opportunity at the canon’s. Cathedral cities are curious places. The city people keep to the city people, and know nothing of the county people. But, on the other hand, the cathedral people are hand in glove with the county people, and know little or nothing of the city people.’

‘He had better come to the meeting of the Naturals on Wednesday,—“that would be the day after the morrow,”—and that will be an opportunity of comparing differences between city and country people.’

‘Who are the Naturals?’ I inquired.

‘O, that is our county Naturalist Society. They have a field-day on Wednesday at Breay Castle. O, that is great fun. Our favourite Naturalist is to read a paper on local edible snails found near Breay Castle, and originally imported by the Romans. And a celebrated antiquary is coming down on purpose to discuss the style of boot used in the time of the earlier Plantagenets.’

‘A little dry, isn’t it?’

‘You’re not obliged to listen to it unless you like. The feeding will be better than the reading, I expect. It is quite the best day

of the year. You will see our clever heiress, Mary Edgeworth; and if you like I will introduce you. I am a married man myself, and so I am out of the competition; and as for Charley, he is nobody until he gets into the Foreign Office. Then you will see all our county society. You may know Cambridge and London as well as you like; but if you have not lived in the counties you may not understand county society.’

‘I am told that after all “county people” are the nicest people out.’

‘All our county society is really included within very manageable limits. The railways take us about everywhere, and so the whole thing lies in a nutshell. We all know one another by name, and generally by sight. We are not altogether unlike the condition of things in Attica, if you remember your Thicksides—the men of the hills, the men of the plain, and the men of the seaboard. Among the hills we have our nobles—the county only boasts of three—and on the plains the towns, with burgesses; and as for the seaboard, by which I mean the coast of our broad tidal river, why, I am afraid my analogy rather breaks down here. The Earl of Lechmere is our lord-lieutenant—his property stretches from the sea to the hills—very pleasant unassuming people, and often give me a few days’ shooting. I hardly suppose they will be at the Naturals; but there will be some Honourable or other to represent them. When we get away from Lord Lechmere’s lands there are a great many country squires scattered about, and the parsons here all belong to squires’ families, and are as good as squires themselves. You will find that they know the burghers, meeting them at railway and hospital meetings, and all that sort of thing, but you will

find that they do not cohere very easily. Bishop, dean, and canons of course make common cause with the county people. Our merchants are all on the look-out to buy land and become county people themselves.'

So it was settled that we should go to the Naturals.

CHAPTER IV.

BREAY CASTLE presented a very different scene this crowded gala day from the silence and solitude it presented a few evenings ago when I lingered and meditated in its deserted court. Carriage after carriage rolled past the old stone lions, and one gay party after another passed through the old gateway between the turrets. The Naturals mustered in large force, and with less appearance of lunacy than might be imagined from their nickname. It was easy to draw a line of distinction between those who were bent on improving their minds and those who meant to improve the occasion according to their own peculiar theories. There was no mistaking the spectacles, the note-cases, the instruments, the subdued raiment, with the gayer costumes of flirts and butterflies whose researches would hardly extend beyond the geology of a pastry-pie. I was introduced to the President of the Naturals, and I am not sure that I was not then and there elected a Natural myself. As I was entering an old corridor whose windows looked out on the gray barbican, whom should I meet but Mrs. Percival, that sweet old lady who was with 'Mary' at the Point, and in the crowd was 'Mary' herself, the cynosure of many eyes.

After hasty kindly greetings,

'Now what is the name of the

young lady who was with you the other evening?'

'Why, surely you know her name?' said Mrs. Percival, with a smile. 'That is Mrs. Edgeworth.'

'Mrs. Edgeworth?' I exclaimed in wonderment, almost in terror, glancing at the exquisite form in the sumptuous-coloured dress. 'Is she married then? Who is her husband?'

'She is a widow,' answered the lady.

'A widow!' I exclaimed. 'She looks as little like a widow as any lady I have ever seen.' This was with another glance at the lady's attire.

'She has had a very singular history,' said Mrs. Percival, 'which goes far to explain one or two things which may appear singular to you. I have known her all my life, and I sometimes have called her the child-wife and sometimes the maid-widow. You could not belong to this part of the country without hearing all about her history. She was married when she was only sixteen to an officer in the Guards. She was wild about him, a spoilt child; and her parents could not refuse her. I cannot say that I cared for him at all myself, nor do I think, if things had turned out differently, that he would have made her a good husband. She was an only child and an heiress, and he was seventeen or eighteen years older than herself,—more than as old again, which I always think is too great a disparity. But, as I said, she was wild about him. I have repeatedly seen cases when quite young girls have been devotedly attached to men old enough to be their fathers. Now Mary Gorst—'

'Mary Gorst!' I exclaimed. 'Was she, then, any relation to Mr. Gorst of Amesbury?' And I thought of the pretty place I

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passed in going from the station.

'The very same ; his daughter, his only daughter, whose sad story was known all over the country some five years ago. On the very marriage morning Major Edgeworth, riding over to Amesbury Church with his best man, had an accident with his horse. The branch line had just been finished, and for the first time, perhaps, the animal heard the shrill railway whistle, at least that is what we supposed, for the horse had borne him in safety for years before. He was thrown from his horse on his head, but he gathered himself up all right, and proceeded to church, where the marriage service was performed. The breakfast was passing gaily off, and he was just rising to return thanks for himself and his bride, when he fell back insensible. It was then found out that he must have sustained some serious brain injury from the fall, although the mischief was some hours in showing itself. He never got over that attack. Instead of going on his marriage tour he was carried upstairs in a lamentable condition. Softening of the brain set in, and within six months after the wedding he died. Now I think her peculiar history will account for a little that is peculiar about herself. She is a rich man's only child, and, indeed, she has a considerable independent income of her own in right of the marriage settlement, wherein even the ink was hardly dry when all her hopes of happiness were dashed to the earth by this terrible disaster. It altered her character altogether and at once. From a laughing child she became a grave earnest woman. Her father is so aged and ailing that she has to manage his property as well as her own. She has had many suitors, and though I think

she ought to marry again, she gives no encouragement; her peculiar history and position make her very straightforward and independent, and a little autocratic ; but I know her genuine worth, and have every reason to think gratefully of her kindness. You must know she has taken rather a fancy to you, Mr. Hylton. She was quite interested by your adventures the other night, and thinks you showed more originality and independence than is to be found among the uninteresting young men in this part of the country. But here she is.' And, looking upward, I saw her moving along the old castle wall, almost broad enough to admit two, and then descend rapidly down the narrow timeworn steps with a free, graceful, careless carriage peculiarly her own.

We were sitting on a ruined buttress of the old castle, overlooking the wide champaign and the broad-flowing peaceful river that flowed just beneath the castle's ancient watergate.

She came and sat down beside us.

I don't know whether there was any consciousness betrayed on my side or on her friend's, but she said quickly and decidedly,

'You have been talking about me.'

'Yes, Mrs. Edgeworth,' I answered.

'And you know my sad history?'

'Well,' I said, 'as I suppose all the people here know it, more or less.'

'What is your history, Mr. Hylton?'

'I am in the uninteresting position of not possessing a history, Mrs. Edgeworth.'

'That can be hardly correct, I think.' Then she stamped her little foot somewhat imperiously. 'Tell it to me.'

A sudden thought passed through my mind : 'If you want

the literal truth, you shall have it, coarse, repellent, commonplace ; and if you are a mere woman of the world, amusing yourself with me, it may make you take yourself off as soon as you choose, fair lady.' Then I spoke :

' Mine is a very commonplace and vulgar history. In my past life I have wasted nearly all my time and all my money ; and, like Mr. Micawber, I am waiting for something to turn up.'

' That is rather hard things to say against oneself at the age of —'

And she looked inquiringly.

' Twenty-three.'

' I am twenty-three myself, and of course I am getting on to a quarter of a century, and I feel at least as if the century were three-quarters over. But there is a great difference between man and woman in this respect.'

' So they say,' I answered ; ' but I am never quite certain that these received sayings are always right. I distrust all generalisations.'

' Do you see that pretty little church peeping up among the trees ?'

' Yes. The situation, with the river laving it, is unusually fine.'

' Would you like to see it ? It has been perfectly restored. All the windows are of painted glass ; and in those woods through which our path will lie you will, perhaps, hear the nightingale for the last time this season.'

She looked at her companion.

' Yes, my dear,' said the old lady ; I thought, perhaps, a little too submissively.

' Or perhaps you would prefer to hear about the edible snails. They really are the same snails that are found in some parts of Italy, and the Roman soldiers must have brought them over with them, for they had a bath about here.'

' I had rather see the wood and

the church, and have a walk with you and Mrs. Percival.'

' Come, then,' she said. ' It is rather a steep path from here to the moat, and from the moat we get into a path across the meadows.'

She knew the old locality perfectly, and bounded down the path. Her elderly companion followed, not without some signals of distress.

' So you are still wandering about the country in this undefined sort of way ?'

' Yes,' I answered : ' it is rather a "Wilhelm Meister" sort of life, wandering about as one lists without the shadow of a moral obligation.'

' I daresay it is very nice ; but it is one so opposite to what we ladies lead, that it is difficult to give a clear presentation of it to one's mind. Do you know whom you remind me of, Mr. Hylton ?'

' Who ?'

' That scholar of Oxenford there is such a pretty poem about, who went and lived with the gipsies, and was called the gipsy-scholar.'

' You are the only gipsy I have seen.'

' And I make a poor sort of Romany, I suspect, as I am a very sober-minded and unromantic personage.'

' I fancy I am more like Wilhelm Meister serving an apprenticeship of some sort or other.'

' I never could admire the immoral Wilhelm very much.'

' Then you cannot really care,' I answered, ' for Goethe's philosophy or Goethe's life. I suppose he himself would say, in vindication of Wilhelm and of himself, that they were allowing their moral nature to work out a self-development untrammeled by conventionalities, and so come to a true theory of being.'

Her beautiful eyes had a sort of merry scorn in them.

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'That sounds very grand, Mr. Hylton, and I think I have heard something of the sort before; but, reduced to plain English prose, it is only a wordy excuse for abominable selfishness.'

'You are a little hard on me.'

'O, I don't mean you. I do not put you down as anything so poetical as a Scholar-gipsy or a Wilhelm Meister.'

'I think there may be a tendency that way.'

'Possibly. But what I am thinking of is this: if we all took to going out gipsying, who is to encounter the real duty and dulness of life? Who are to keep the wheels of life going and look after the teaching, nursing, cooking of life—to speak of poor woman's pursuits alone—besides the more ennobling business of our lords?'

'I expect I shall have to get into harness one of these days; and though I don't profess to like work, I shall by and by do it.'

'You see,' she said, 'my life has been altogether illusion and mirage. I was a wild self-willed girl when I married a man whom I simply worshipped, and the marriage-bond was sundered as soon as made. I am altogether a different being now. I can hardly recognise my former self. He could not have made me happy, if I had been then as I am now; we should, perhaps, have had our altercations, but on the whole have lived harmoniously.'

'I hardly know,' I said. 'He was much older than you, and at his age the character becomes stereotyped.'

'Anyhow,' she said, 'I feel that my loss has broken the springs of my life. All the freshness and colour have gone out of it. I have my dearest father to care for,

"And keep awhile one parent from the skies."

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I have my poor people and all my duties. But I have to look to the skies for any real happiness. I recognise and submit to my fate, and even approve of it. I get very tired, and sometimes I think I feel my wings growing.'

'Forgive the thought, but suppose you had lived to find out that the husband whom you worshipped were altogether an illusion?'

'I should not have lived at all; I should have died—have died of a broken heart. I did so very nearly as it was; for years my great grief hung upon my heart. Perhaps I wanted a great grief.'

'Schubert, the musician, said that character could only be formed out of a great grief. That would suit you, Mrs. Edgeworth. He also proceeds to say that there is something poor and frivolous about natures that have not been subject to it; and that, I suppose, would suit me!'

'And I think you deal hardly with yourself, Mr. Hylton. If you are not satisfied with yourself, I am sure you have an ideal that is better than yourself.'

We had now got back to the old castle. It was emptying fast of the Naturals. All the noisy life with which we had peopled it had died out, and we were leaving the grim reliquary ruins to the bats that nestled in the towers and the mists that swam up from the river. The neat well-remembered carriage was standing outside the balustraded gates, and I assisted the ladies to enter. Most of the excursionists had gone back by the special train. My friend had found me a vacant place in a friendly drag where he himself mounted the box. For a short time there was a merry conversation among the occupants, but as the evening shadows darkened we all relapsed into silence. The thought, what was I to do with

myself? came with a sickening sense of care upon my mind. I dwelt on Mary Edgeworth's perfect features, on her silvery tones ; but there was a difference as great as if oceans rolled and mountains rose between us. She was as sacred and inaccessible as the evening star that now began to glimmer through the umbrage of the trees by the river. Her parting words consoled me. I had said, in conventional phrase, 'I hope we shall meet again,' and she had answered with prophetic voice, 'I am sure we shall.'

CHAPTER V.

EARLY next morning I received a short note written by Mrs. Blount, 'I am obliged to go away, but my uncle Canon Ffrench expects you to dinner all the same at seven.'

This is an odd sort of thing, this going to a house which you have never seen, and dining with people whom you do not know. My first impulse was to send off a note to decline. But I felt I must go on with my series of adventures and misadventures. I should go on pedestrianising so long as the fine weather held up. The clouds were threatening, and when the rains came down it would be time to shift the venue.

My portmanteau had arrived by train from Amesbury Station, according to a telegram which I had sent. Nobody need be at a loss to kill a morning in a cathedral city. Every cathedral city has a history ; the cathedral itself is an embodied history. Then you may be sure that it has had something to do with the Wars of the Roses or with the Great Rebellion. I got through the day, and up to this present time I have

a misty recollection of the painted glass and the rolling anthem.

I turned into the cathedral close. There was something about it which at once satisfied my aesthetic sense. There was a central space of green, along each side of which was an avenue of trees, now shedding fast the yellow leaves. There were large sleepy-looking houses about, with close-shaven lawns, chiefly ornamented with standard roses and basket beds of flowers. A servant in dark livery took charge of my traps and ushered me up-stairs. It was a large oaken drawing-room. No candles were lighted, and I should never have suspected gas in such a room. The ruddy blaze of a cheerful fire contended with the last red light of the westering sun. An old-fashioned gentleman advanced, with the most beautiful eyes that I have seen in an aged face, and at once set me at perfect ease with his wonderful sweetness and benignity of manner. A tall handsome-looking army man and his elegant wife, son and daughter-in-law of the widowed canon, did the honours. One lady I was greatly struck with, who seemed the queen of the room. I understood afterwards that she was Lady Lechmere, the wife of the lord-lieutenant, who kept together the society of the county while her husband was salmon-fishing in Norway. There were no introductions, except to a rather plain man and a very acute-looking Cambridge man (who, I was told, was an inspector of schools), a well-known critic and writer of articles. I thought too, from the description of things given me by my friend at the fishing place, that if a county lady were to appear anywhere in the society of the cathedral town of Dorchester, it would be at the venerable canon's. I looked for

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her, feeling at the time that I had no right to do so, and it almost appeared a bit of fairy glamour, a hearing that could not be trusted, a seeing that could not be believed, when Mr. Gorst and Mrs. Edge-worth entered the room.

It was very touching to see the old canon meet the still older squire, and testify his thankfulness in that he had violated his rule about not going out to dinner. The erect man now bent, the vigorous man now feeble, marks of manly beauty gleaming through physical decay—such was Squire Gorst, and I could well imagine how once he could ride to his hounds. And blessings on that kindly canon—not only that his ready hospitality had welcomed the stranger within his gates—not only that the ecclesiastical cookery had left lay efforts far behind, but because it brought that beautiful face again before me, which had such power to elevate and purify, and gave me that formal introduction to Squire Gorst which is a sort of fetish in English society, absolutely indispensable in all our social arrangements! It was an exquisite happiness to me to see this eloquent face mantling with pleasure when I made that unexpected apparition of myself. It was almost hid from me by a mass of splendid flowers, grouped in the centre of the table, which made me savagely critical on the iniquities of an English dinner-table. But that marvellous evening it was not even the presence of my mistress which made the scene so memorable. Its interest mainly belongs to the most uninteresting person in the room; that combative, cynical, self-contented inspector of schools whom I mentioned just now. He was a Fellow of Trinity, and as a Cambridge man I had learned both to respect and detest Fellows of Trinity.

They have brain-power and industry; but each Fellow deifies himself and his order, and there is generally also a mixture of sharp worldliness, the echo of that perpetual question which mars so much of Cambridge study—will it pay? I happened to sit next to him at dessert, and he went off into quite a monologue about himself.

'There's nothing like being an inspector of schools,' he said, 'after all. There are bad points about it, no doubt. There is always a certain amount of drudgery in going over elementary matters so constantly with children. Thus you see the certificated teachers always at first regard you as their natural enemy. By and by, however, they come to like you better. You really begin to be interested in watching the progress of education. Then you go wherever you like, and book Government with the expenses. Then you come to know the whole of the county, and the squires and parsons regard you as one of themselves. There are compensating mercies, besides quarter-day, even for H.M.'s inspector of schools. I don't mean to say that I should not enjoy doing nothing better; but as this work is to be done, I do it, and get what enjoyment I can out of it. All real work you know, so the moralists tell us, ought to have an element of fag and grind and unpleasantness about it, to be worthy of the name.'

'Well, I am a leisure man myself,' I answered; 'and, in fact, I have never been very much anything else. But I begin to think I ought to be doing something. I should not at all mind grinding up the first four rules of arithmetic, and some geography and grammar, and going about the country to examine the little beggars about it.'

H.M. Inspector laughed, and

seemed to take it as a capital joke, and the decanter coming round he took another glass of the Dean's port, and said something that brought him into the current of the general conversation.

I could hardly believe my ears when, some time after, the inspector of schools came up to me and said,

'Would you really like something to do in my line, Mr. Hylton? I am looking out for a man that would have to do very much the same kind of work that I am doing myself. We inspectors of schools have got to employ men under us for a time for a special purpose. The Government are collecting all the information they can, with a view to future legislation. We are consequently wanting men who will be called Inspectors of Returns. It is only for a couple of years, and only two hundred a year; but it is said, though of course I cannot guarantee the statement, that in future the full Inspectors will be selected out of the Inspectors of Returns.'

If ever there was music in my ears, this proposition made such music for me. In my solitary rambles I had been forced to think. I had been thinking of the future; and once or twice when I woke up in the morning I found that future weighing on me like a nightmare, although the brightness of morning had never failed to chase the shadows away, although the fresh trust of youth in a controlling Providence had quenched despair. The delightful feeling which I felt at the moment was not the feeling that I was dropping into a pleasant kind of berth, suitable to a man whose banking-book was in such a deplorable condition, but the novel sensation that I was really finding something to do, that somewhere I had a niche

in the world where I might fill my appointed place and do something useful—a *sensation* that superinduced that other novel sensation of self-respect procured by internal self-congratulation. And somehow or other the thought of Mary Edgeworth mixed itself up with the whole. The thought flamed into sudden life and purpose when her glorious voice filled the old canon's house with music, and made me vow a vow that there was no time I would not wait, no work I would not work, if only I might link my fortune to the golden hope that entered my heart. It was quite a new sensation to me to find that there was some living being with whom I might link all the dormant powers and aspirations of my nature; whose presence was to me an intellectual stimulus that stirred up all my energies, and at the same time gave me a sense of rest and peace and unutterable happiness. From which state of mind it may be concluded that I was beginning to be very much in love with Mrs. Edgeworth. I don't profess to be a superior kind of man—the man who can guide and elevate and develop a woman's nature, and all that style of thing. On the contrary, I am of the opinion that I want a deal of guiding and elevating and developing myself; and I could worship as a divinity any angelic woman who would do this sort of thing for me.

Presently H.M. Inspector said to Mr. Gorst,

'My friend, Mr. Hylton, is coming into the neighbourhood of Amesbury to look after the Government returns of schools. I have been telling him how good the country people are to an inspector; and as he is going to be one of us in a sort of way, I am sure you will extend to him the same sort of kindness.'

'He must come and stay with me exactly as you have done. You must make Amesbury Hall your headquarters, Mr. Hylton, whenever you have anything to do in our part of the county.'

Thus it was that in the course of a few weeks I was a guest of Mr. Gorst's and Mrs. Edgeworth's. I do not know how it happened; but when I went to my pretty chamber and laid down that night, there stole over mind and body a sense of delicious restfulness and peace. I had always been a wanderer and wayfarer, unknowing the care either of sister or mother; and, though not without glimpses of better things, to which I have hardly done justice in this scanty narrative, I had led the inconsequential, careless, selfish life of a mere idler about town. I contrasted that ignoble existence with one so full of plan and purpose, of order and beneficence, like Mary Edgeworth's. She wanted to know what I was saying about Amesbury, and under that pretence she taught me my business as Inspector of Returns, which required more skill and method than I had looked for. Very puzzled indeed did the worthy station-master look when he met me and Mrs. Edgeworth walking about the fields; he merely touched his hat, however, and appeared to plunge into an illimitable train of thought.

She was so very dear to me, I felt that a false nature was disappearing, 'as a serpent throws its skin,' and that my true self was coming into conscious life. I did not like to tell her what I thought and felt. This new life, not only of my pleasant stay at the Hall, but of my quickened nature, would be shattered if she should be astonished at my presumption—should wonder how I had misconceived the nature of

her feelings. There was something in her of the clever house-keeping elder sister's advising attitude towards her collegian brother. There were some wretched worldly thoughts that made themselves felt in my unstable mind. It was rather early to fix myself at three-and-twenty. I might meet some one whom I might like better. Then a widow, despite the child-wife theory and the very peculiar history, was a widow; and I had thought, in the rare moments when I ever thought, that I would never marry a widow. I had better think it over again, and, as Lord Dundreary says, speak about it to her in a year or two. But I soon blushed for the meanness of such thoughts. It seemed to me that a happy chance had come to me, a turning-point in life, and I should be like the base Ju-dean who threw away 'a pearl richer than all its tribe if I should lose the glorious chance. I have known aged men who with wet and weary eyes had mused over the glorious possibilities of their youth which waywardness or selfishness had thrown away. 'Now don't you be blind, old fellow,' I said to myself, in that easy conversational tone which I occasionally adopt when in my own company. 'You are not to postpone, or dream, or shilly-shally. Approach the deadly imminent breach, and it will lead into a garden of Paradise. Make up your mind clearly, worthily, irrevocably, and act on your decision. Try as a man, and if it is against you take your fate as a man. At least you will not have the remorse that you lost by your own fault—lost what might give a richer colour and higher meaning to your life. And suppose you should win!' There was the thought of that fine old place, the goodly estate, the horses and hounds. But I bless myself in

the recollection that for the time I lost sight of these in thinking of Mary herself. Would it be possible that the treasures of that heart and mind could ever be mine? 'Ah,' I said to myself, 'there are some people who have to accept the wealth, the greatness, the happiness, of this life. They have never deserved, they can never repay, all the blessings that have been showered on them. They can only live a life of thankfulness and love.' I could not but whisper to myself, too, that there was a fate which was leading up to the consummation of my life, so marvellously strange had been this 'chapter of accidents;' only I have heard of stranger chapters still. Certainly I shall have a story to tell Sir Henry.

At last a day came when I sat by her side, in the old oaken library, in the winter firelight glow. I think she knew the sense to which my words had pointed, and she did not interrupt me. 'I am only

a good-for nothing fellow, I am afraid; an idle man, a bit of a scamp, a good deal of an ignoramus. But I think I have one merit—that of being able to appreciate excellence and loveliness when I see it. And I really have one thought now before my mind, —that as the years go on I may ripen into the power of bearing a worthy part in life—that there is something in the world that I may win and wear. It may help me if I only thought that you watched my work—that you gave me sympathy and regard, and, let me tell you now, though I feel I am venturing my all in making the admission, that I do look forward to a time when I hope to make myself worthy of telling you of my love.'

I took her hand in mine. I thought it would be withdrawn, but it was not. I sought her eyes, but they were downcast, a tear trembling through the lashes.

'Perhaps,' she said, very quietly and simply, 'I do not think that you are unworthy now.'



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THE PLEASURES OF STAR-GAZING.

THE grand astronomical event of 1874 was the transit of Venus across the Sun's disc. At the preceding transit, in the last century, France took a leading part, and, on the recent occasion, was naturally anxious to maintain her scientific reputation. But the premature deaths of those eminent astronomers, MM. Delaunay and Laugier, together with the disastrous events of 1870-1, raised considerable difficulties. Enterprise was shackled by a straitened budget. The commission, appointed to consider what France could do in this scientific rivalry of all civilised nations, could only decide on sending out four astronomical missions: two in the northern hemisphere, to Pekin and Yokohama; and two to the southern hemisphere, Campbell's Island and St. Paul's Island (the St. Paul's in the eastern hemisphere, for there is another St. Paul's in the western hemisphere). This numerical inferiority was compensated by supplying the four missions with powerful instruments, and by appointing two auxiliary missions, one at Noumea and the other in Cochin China.

Astronomy has recently been complicated by a new mode of observation. Besides the direct study of the object observed, by watching it in the usual way through the telescope, photography has supplied the means of catching instantaneously and preserving the exact image of every phase of an astronomical phenomenon. M. Janssen, at the head of the expedition to Japan, took with him photographers and an instrument

called a photographic revolver, which rendered great service by giving good proofs in the stations where the weather was favourable. For the conclusions thence obtained, M. Janssen tells us we must wait. In another year we shall have complete cognisance of the results arrived at by all the missions. At present he only gives an account of the dangers and difficulties he had to surmount, mentioning to what extent his party's combined observations were successful. After the first interior contact of the Sun's and the planet's discs, two photographers, each at his instrument, took as many photographs as they possibly could; but the clouds interposed serious obstacles. Just before the second interior contact, the sky round the Sun became almost providentially clear, which allowed the exact instant to be determined with precision. The sky was clouded at the moment of the last exterior contact, which however is of slight importance. But it is not M. Janssen's adventures that we will follow now. Our course is directed towards that lonely spot, so hard to reach and to set foot on, high up (or down) in the southern hemisphere.

The great difficulties of navigation and of material installation on terra firma which it was foreseen would be encountered in the South Seas, induced the commission to confide that task to naval officers, even although they had no long experience in the use of large astronomical instruments. Commandant E. Mouchez, capitaine de vaisseau, of whose narrative this

paper is a summary, was selected for the honour of conducting the expedition to St. Paul's; an islet isolated in the midst of the vast basin of the Austral seas, the crater of a scarcely extinct volcano, rising from the bottom of the ocean to nearly a thousand feet above the surface of the waters.

St. Paul's is an absolutely sterile rock, uninhabitable, without potable water, without apparent vegetation, frequented only by troops of seals, by flocks of penguins, and other sea-fowl. Every year, during the three summer months, from December to April, a few Madagascan sailors from Réunion (Ile Bourbon) take up their quarters there, to salt and dry some fifty or sixty barrels of cod, which they catch round the island. The weather then is sometimes tolerably calm; throughout the rest of the year the island is scarcely accessible. At every season gusts of wind and squalls are frequent. At the equinoxes they are continuous, acquiring the violence of veritable storms; and this was the intended epoch of the expedition's arrival there.

That ocean, completely unbroken by land over a breadth of two thousand leagues between Africa and Australia, rises and spreads its undulations at full liberty. Consequently the waves acquire dimensions unknown in other latitudes; and they break with violence all round this rock, which is too small to afford sufficiently sheltered anchorage. In these regions the sky is generally hidden or very cloudy during the windy season, from April to November; whilst thick mists take possession of the entire horizon during summer, when warm winds from the equator replace the polar winds. These particulars, partly obtained from Mr. R. Scott, the learned chief of the London me-

teorological service, and partly from the Réunion sailors, decidedly proved that the chances of a clear sky at St. Paul's on the 9th of December were extremely small—eight or ten to a hundred at the very most. They were even smaller, according to the experience the mission was about to acquire. Such deplorable conditions of climate, the difficulties of landing, and the probability of damage to the instruments, left, at the moment of quitting France, very little hope of ultimate success. But the perfectly isolated position of St. Paul's in the middle of the Southern Ocean gave such value to the observations that might possibly be made there, as to render it absolutely indispensable that some one should attempt the enterprise, however uncertain the event might be.

In the second week of August, the party, passing through the Suez Canal, reached the Red Sea, which formerly took eight months' dangerous and difficult navigation to arrive at, and which then was but little known, but is now one of the most frequented thoroughfares in the world. Consequently, old sailors never leave the canal without feeling a combined sentiment of admiration and astonishment that so modest-looking a thread of water should have secured such grand results, with still grander consequences in the future. But the extreme rapidity of modern voyages obtained by fast steamers and divided isthmuses is not without its inconveniences for the traveller, whose temperament is not endowed with sufficient elasticity. During the few days required to pass from the chilly climates of Europe to the torrid heats of the Red Sea, the disturbed equilibrium of the vital functions has not time to re-establish itself. Sudden deaths,

owing to inflammatory disease and cerebral congestions, are the frequent result. One of their young companions, prostrated without warning by a constant heat of from 97° to 103° Fahr., could only be recalled to life by twenty-four hours' application of ice to the head. It was doubtless to avoid these accidents that the old navigators adopted the custom of being bled before crossing the equator.

At St. Denis (the port of the Ile Bourbon) they found the government transport, the *Dives*, which was to carry them and their instruments to St. Paul's. The captain of the ship, as well as the fishermen who annually frequent the island, advised them to delay their departure a month, urging the impossibility, at that season, of approaching the rock and landing their bulky stores without damage. The sea then is much too rough and the wind too violent for safety. But as the delay might compromise the preliminaries of observation, Commandant Mouchez, confident in his good luck and his firm resolution to do everything to succeed, started on the day appointed.

A call was made at Mauritius, for the sake of trans-shipping instruments, which would have been hazardous to attempt in the bad roadstead of St. Denis. Advantage was taken of the opportunity to visit Dr. Gill's observatory, the astronomer in charge of the expedition sent out entirely at Lord Lindsay's expense—a noble use of a large fortune, frequent, the commandant observes, in England, but less frequent, we may add, in France. The outlay this time was ill-requited; for the sun was hidden by clouds at Mauritius during a portion of Venus's transit.

On the evening of the 9th of

September they left Mauritius for St. Paul's. Their fortnight's passage was slow, but they had fine weather until they approached the island. Even within twenty leagues of it, strong hopes were entertained of landing during one of the rare calms of the season; but the disturbing influence which islets isolated in the midst of the ocean always exercise on the surrounding atmosphere was felt as they drew nearer. On the morning of the 22d it blew a gale, with continual showers of hail and rain; the horizon was completely shrouded in mist, the waves rose, threatening to drive them past the island without their seeing it. By skilful seamanship they managed at sunset to drop anchor about four hundred yards from the breach in the cliff by which the sea has made an irruption into the crater.

Nothing can convey an idea of the sombre and savage aspect of the spot thus suddenly revealed to view, and which was to be their dwelling-place. The evening was darkening fast. At a very short distance rose black perpendicular cliffs, from seven hundred to a thousand feet high, whose sharp peaks tore the clouds which drifted with extreme rapidity overhead. The wind, accompanied by snow and hail, rushed in violent squalls into the basin of the crater, raising, as it eddied round it, columns of spray fifty or sixty feet high, resembling water-sprouts, which the strangers at first took for an eruption of steam and water from the bottom, bursting from the bowels of the volcano. The *Dives* laboured under these down-pouring gusts, lurching sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other, and tugging at her anchor, although the proximity of the shore rendered the sea tolerably smooth. But, a

few cables' length from the ship, enormous breakers were leaping and foaming; the horizon was indented with the notches characteristic of a heavy swell—so restricted was the space of calm water in which they had found a precarious shelter. A few sea-birds, the only perceptible living creatures, astonished at the intruders' presence, hovered around them almost within reach, as if inquiring by shrill screams what they wanted.

A glimpse was caught, in the hollow interior of the crater, of ruined roofless huts and pieces of wreck, which augured badly for the future. In the midst of the narrow channel leading into this basin, the vast hulk of an English frigate, the *Megæra*, almost completely high and dry, lay surrounded by numerous fragments, on which the sea broke as if they were a mass of rocks. After resisting the tempests of three or four years, it was about to disappear in the storm which was soon to vent its rage on the new arrivals, and render their position so critical. In short, the most fantastic conceptions of modern artists would fail to give an idea of the picture of desolation which lay before their eyes. And an anxious night only served to show more clearly the dangers and difficulties of their position. The only level spot where the installation of an observatory was possible was a beach of pebbles, the rounded vestiges of the rocky downfall which admitted the sea into the crater, and which was by no means sure not to be covered by the waves in stormy weather. This beach formed part of the edge of the basin, which is the bottom of a circular gulf more than a thousand yards in diameter, with vertical walls three hundred yards high, to scale

which without a rope-ladder seemed impossible. The whole brink of the basin is literally covered with the remains of wrecks. Sufficient firewood was therefore obtainable, but for boiling, at least, it was not wanted.

The commandant visited the principal huts, to select those which could be most easily repaired. On approaching one of them he heard, with surprise, a strange confused noise, and suddenly found himself assailed at the door by a troop of kids (*cabris*), wild cats, rats, and mice, making their escape in all directions. Without further examination he thence concluded that this one was less ruined than the other hovels. He had it cleared immediately of its accumulated filth, to convert it, the very same day, into their principal lodging.

It was the shipwrecked crew of the *Megæra*, eight hundred men, who built those huts wherever they found sheltered nooks in the rocks; and, at the moment of their departure, effected doubtless very hastily, they must have abandoned considerable stores, which everywhere lay scattered about. The ground was covered with barrels and boxes still full of sundry articles; with masts, ropes, pulleys, household utensils, all sorts of furniture, small rowing-boats, and a strange medley of odds and ends. The sight of those objects, undeniable witnesses of a great disaster, filled the astronomers' hearts with pity, combined, nevertheless, with the satisfactory hope that the said objects, in spite of three years' exposure to the open air, might supply the new arrivals with unexpected comforts. Some boxes, stowed away in one of the cabins, contained several hundred volumes, comprising the principal English, French, and German philosophical works of the eight-

eenth century, treatises of theology, big folios on the canon law, and the *Parfait Notaire*. For some years past rats seem to have been the only visitors of this library, so strangely composed for fishers of cod or for sailors wrecked on an inhospitable rock.

The party found on the circumference of the crater numerous springs of hot water, in which in a few minutes they were able to cook the lobsters caught in great abundance amongst the neighbouring rocks. In many spots the soil round their cabins was burning hot at a few inches' depth. By digging a yard and a half or a couple of yards deep the naturalists of the expedition found a temperature as high as 200° Centigrade, the boiling point of water being 100°. They would therefore have found no difficulty in warming their huts and cooking their food had combustibles happened to run short. The only trace of vegetation perceptible was a tough grass, resembling the 'alpha' of Algeria, which barely sufficed to afford a little shelter to the numerous penguins established on the face of the cliff, six hundred feet above the level of the sea.

No attempt appears to have been made by the expedition to follow Captain Cook's example during his voyages of discovery, by endowing the island with natural productions likely to be useful to strangers willingly or unwillingly landing on it. Seeds of the hardier and more succulent grasses and of antiscorbutic and maritime vegetables, as Scotch kale, parsley, dandelion, true samphire, sorrel, and garden cress, might at least have been sown and left to take their chance. Even innoxious weeds, as thistles, would furnish the commencement of a future stratum of vegetable mould. Fern spores, in sodamp a climate, might find a con-

genial home amongst the rocks; whilst artificial hollows would prove useful recipients, at least at times, of the fresh water yielded by the clouds and mists. Vegetation of the kinds possible under the circumstances must precede the naturalisation of serviceable animals. Those at present introduced and settled there may be regarded as mischievous rather than otherwise. Rats and mice are the almost inevitable introduction of shipwrecks. A few pairs of rodent-eating owls or hawks might be the most effectual means of keeping them down. Some carnivorous creature is wanted which will not injure the penguins or their young. The cats, as will be seen, are worse than useless. But the most destructive creatures in a spot which wants to acquire or retain its vegetation are goats. In St. Helena they annihilated many species of plants (most interesting, even if not valuable for their uses, because not found elsewhere), which are consequently extinct and lost to the world for ever. In the Pyrenees, assisted by sheep and cattle, they have reduced vast tracts of once-wooded mountain to naked, sterile, burnt-up rock.

At St. Paul's those curious creatures, the penguins, the future companions and the greatest source of amusement to their learned visitors, were so tame and familiar that, in order to walk through their crowded flocks, it was necessary to push them aside with feet and hands in order to avoid crushing them; and even then they did not make way without protesting. If the human strangers sat down amongst them they allowed themselves to be taken up and caressed; after which they went on with their own private affairs as if nothing had happened, except the arrival of a few penguins the

more. Extremely slow and heavy in their hopping mode of progression on land, perhaps it is their conscious inability to escape from danger which makes them apparently indifferent to it; for in the sea, where they are exceedingly agile, they would not allow themselves to be approached nearer than a hundred yards. At that epoch, they were occupied with sitting on their eggs. But through what inexplicable motive, with the great difficulty they have in walking, did they select for their hatching-places the summits of cliffs, up which they must climb every day with infinite toil after their return from fishing, and where their young are especially exposed to the birds of prey that make the neighbouring cliffs their home? The singular fact remains unexplained, no plausible reason having been discovered for it.

After a rapid inspection of the ground, an attempt is made to land material; but the wind blows and whirls round the vast funnel with such violence, that the men can hardly stand upright. One martyr to sea-sickness begs permission to sleep on shore in company with six fishermen brought from Réunion. The storm increases; the Dives breaks, one after another, three anchors out of the four she possessed, and is obliged to run before the wind. She returns, to the delight of the individual left on the island, and manages to land her stores under precarious and difficult circumstances. It would have been convenient and reassuring to keep her lying at anchor off St. Paul's, but the loss necessitates her being sent to Réunion to procure other anchors, with orders to return in December, to carry away the mission after the completion of their tasks.

At three in the afternoon, therefore, of the 4th of October, the

Dives weighed her last remaining anchor, and disappeared behind the projecting point of the island, leaving the party to their own resources. She started with the beginning of a storm of much the same violence and the same duration as that which burst on them at their arrival, and rendered so difficult the first installation of absolutely necessary requirements—huts to dwell in, a kitchen, an oven, and the distilling-machine to produce fresh water. Sudden squalls fell eddying from the tops of the cliffs, beating the half-built cabins with sledge-hammer blows, knocking in the roofs, scattering the materials, and compelling the workmen to begin again afresh. Hail and rain never ceased; but the brave sailors, instead of being discouraged, only laboured all the more manfully; perfect agreement reigned amongst all. They soon got their hands into the new employment, resulting in a few days in a fairly comfortable and solid establishment, permeable only to the heaviest rains accompanied by the strongest gales. It became, however, also the immediate refuge of all the rats, mice, and wild cats on the island. Those animals, instead of making war on each other, lived together, unfortunately for their visitors, on the best of terms, feeding only on seabirds and their eggs, and making themselves at home in the new-built dwellings by tasting the provisions and gnawing the clothes.

The naturalists built themselves a very complete habitation and laboratory with the wardrobes, boxes, and furniture found among the wrecks. On the 15th they were able to begin their researches and collections. The construction of the observatory, in the middle of the bank of pebbles spread at the foot of their encampment,

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took nearly a month. About the 1st of November their five principal instruments were set up in five different cabins ; and observations, the study of the instruments, and preparatory trials immediately began. During the month of November squalls were less frequent ; the approach of summer made itself felt ; but there was no improvement in respect to astronomical work. The warm winds from the equator, which replaced the polar winds, produced intense and persistent fogs, even more adverse to observation than the variable skies of stormy weather, which were often clear for several hours.

In general, from the bottom of their crater they rarely perceived a bit of blue sky. Like all lofty islands isolated in mid-ocean, the summits of St. Paul arrest the passing clouds and assist their formation ; but this island presents a further peculiarity which is still more unfortunate for astronomers. The numerous hot-water springs which break out all round the basin keep up a constant evaporation, which, rising as if from the bottom of a caldron, is condensed into mists by contact with the cold external winds. In October, these are frequently dispersed by gales, whilst in the calms of summer they close the crater with a permanent lid, hiding the zenith even in the finest weather, and when the sun is shining brightly within a few hundred yards all round the island.

These conditions threatened to be disastrous for observers on the 9th of December. One sole hope sustained them, namely, the Madagascar fishermen's belief in the moon's favourable influence. They hold that there is always a short brightening up of the weather on the day of new moon ; and at

the two previous lunations the singular fact had been remarked with great satisfaction, because this 9th of December was precisely a new-moon day. Unfortunately, as the critical moment drew near, the weather got worse and worse. On the 6th, falling barometer, sky completely clouded. On the 7th, high wind, rain, and mist. On the 8th, the eve of the transit, barometer still falling, torrential and incessant rain, sea rough ; a fishing boat, arrived the day before, broke her anchors and was driven out to sea ; the whole island enveloped in haze so thick as to hide the opposite sides of the crater ; impossible to repeat the last general rehearsal of the observation with every individual at his post, so heavy and continual was the rain. Although all chance seems absolutely and irreversibly lost, the preparations are continued all the same. At midnight, two hundred and fifty Daguerreian plates are ready to be polished and sensitised at the last moment. The party go to bed downhearted, with the sky as black, the rain as heavy, and the barometer as low as ever. Despair is the prevailing sentiment.

The Madagascar weather-rule seems on the point of refutation, when at three in the morning the wind suddenly shifts from N.E. to N.W., producing a great improvement in the weather. The rain ceases ; the dark veil which covered the sky is torn ; big masses of mist and low-hanging clouds, driven by a fresh breeze, continually cross the zenith, allowing frequent glimpses of the sky. The barometer rises just a trifle. At sunrise, they run to the instruments ; the last preparations are quickly finished, and at 6.30, about half an hour before the first contact, everybody is at his post, perfectly ready to play his part,

which had been well defined and studied beforehand.

The first contact, the least important of the four, was almost completely missed, *i.e.* not determined within forty or fifty seconds; but as Venus continued her progress on the sun the clouds became fewer and fewer, the sky more transparent, the images of exceeding sharpness. About a quarter of an hour after the first contact, when half the planet was still outside the sun, the whole disc of Venus was suddenly apparent, encircled by a pale halo brighter towards the sun than at the planet's summit. Was it an illusion? The micrometer answered, No. This appearance, as remarkable as unexpected, may be attributed partly to the solar atmosphere rendered visible by contrast, and partly to the atmosphere of Venus. The sky had become so pure after the tempest, and the aureole was so brilliant, that traces of this curious phenomenon are visible on the photographs taken.

The second contact was observed under good conditions. From half-past seven till eleven they followed Venus's transit across the sun, which was very rarely obscured by clouds. The gusts of wind, however, which shook the equatorial, proved troublesome. Five hundred good photographs were taken in four hours. The clear state of the sky was so exceptional that the third contact was impatiently awaited, lest rains and mists should return to spoil it. Had they been able, the astronomers would have hurried the planet's progress; but as time and tide wait for no man, so no man can hasten them. At three minutes past eleven the third contact was observed under as favourable conditions as the second. Success was assured; and it was time it should be. The

clouds came on, more and more dense and crowded; and the fourth contact, of less consequence than the two preceding, was only with difficulty observed through the haze. At noon it was just possible to take the sun's passage across the meridian to fix the time of their observations; but he was barely visible, and a few minutes afterwards the pouring rain of the preceding night, accompanied by fog, returned. The storm was not over, but had only lulled during the five hours of the planet's transit. It lasted for thirty-six hours afterwards. The island had simply been in the centre of a cyclone. The rain had ceased an hour before and recommenced a few minutes after the phenomenon. The Dives had returned the day before, and was therefore ready to take the observers away.

During December the naturalists had gone to explore the Isle of Amsterdam, where thick fogs kept them prisoners for several successive days in the grotto which they had chosen for their domicile. Nevertheless, the results of their excursion and the documents they brought back possess very high interest. The interior of this islet, so difficult of access, never having been visited by any scientific mission, they accomplished a veritable voyage of discovery.

December was signalised by a curious final fact. After a high tide, they found stranded on the rocks a gigantic calmar (a species of cuttle-fish), whose body was more than five feet and its arms nearly twenty feet long. An enormous parrot's beak, big round protruding eyes, and multiple arms covered with countless suckers, fully justified the stories related of the hideous animal. They would have liked to bring it home to France; but it would have

taken a barrel of brandy to preserve it whole, and their stock did not permit such prodigality; so they were obliged to be satisfied with the monster's photographs, and with dissecting its most interesting organs.

On January 4th the observers went on board the Dives, after building a commemorative pyramid of stone. Strangely enough, at the moment of quitting this desert island to return to the ways of civilisation, no one could help bestowing a glance of regret on

the spot they were never to behold again. A Robinson Crusoe life, in spite of its hardships, seems endowed with some mysterious attraction, especially when led in pleasant company. But the island soon disappeared behind its curtain of tempests, and they were returning to give a joyful account of their uncertain object fully attained. Only they sometimes asked themselves whether they had not been the dupes of a flattering dream, instead of being favoured by a marvellous reality.

E. S. D.



AFTER THREE YEARS.

I.

THREE years, three brief and fleeting years, three little years ago ;
Three golden summers bright with flowers, three winters white with
snow ;
Three sweet fair springs of buds and birds, three autumns rich with
corn,—
Have come and fled since here I heard the red cock greet the dawn.

II.

And now, as down our village street all thoughtlessly stroll I,
Why doth the blood mount to my cheek, the fire flash from mine
eye ?
See—little Jennie knows me not ! To children three short years
Bring such a crowd of joys and woes, so many smiles and tears.

III.

But she from her big playmate turns, her startled face to hide
Within her elder sister's dress, close nestling to her side.
Wee startled fawnie !—older hearts might grudge that shelter sweet
Within that dainty robe that scarce enshrouds the peeping feet.

IV.

But Nell ! Ah, who can paint the change that three brief years have
wrought !
Can *this* be she with whom I romp'd, whom hoydenish tricks I
taught ?
I left a bud, I find a flower—what if her heart be gone ?
For such sweet roses ne'er were meant by God to bloom alone.

V.

She turns, *she sees me !*—one brief glance of doubt and of amaze ;
And then, as breaks the golden sun through morning's silver haze,
A roseate flush o'er face and brow spreads, and to her dear eyes
There comes (ah, blessings on the thought !) a look of glad surprise.

VI.

O, may it be ere three brief years again have come and flown
That rose I—happy gardener !—may dare to call mine own ?
To call her by the dearest name that gilds young manhood's life—
The noblest, fondest, sweetest name—the tender name of *wife* !

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.



AFTER THREE YEARS,

See the Verses.

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FIFTY YEARS A CRICKETER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE CRICKET-FIELD.'

III.

SOME one will ask, And who was Felix whom we have heard so often mentioned?

His real name was Wanostrocht. Early in life he succeeded to his father's school, well known at Blackheath. But how could a man with a soul for music—he played on six instruments—of a merry, most genial, and social character, and with a genius for cricket withal,—how could such a man as this prosper on a small estate in small boys, when all England was tempting him to play in every great match that was on the programme of the year? Felix lived in the day of the famous Kent Eleven, with Pilch, Wenman, A. and W. Mynn, Hillyer, Dorrington, and Clifford. 'An eleven so good all through,' said Martingale, himself among the best, 'we did not know whom to put in as last man.'

Felix was a left-handed player. I played with him in 1838, the left-handed men of England against the Marylebone Club, with Cobbett, Pilch, and Wenman. This was the last time the Left-hands attempted an eleven. They had once numbered men strong enough to beat the Right, however small the choice of Left.

Felix was a most brilliant hitter. His cut sent the ball like a shot through the fieldsmen, but the style of it was peculiar. He never shifted his pivot foot (the left to him, remember; the right to another), but always crossed his right foot over. This

was also in the style of Wenman, as now of Carpenter, who taught his school-pupils at Marlborough and elsewhere the same style of off-hitting. Saunders also, one of Mr. Ward's time, famed for his brilliant cuts, hit in the same way; and I can recommend this style from my own experience; for then one posture serves for every hit the player makes, as he has one pivot on which to turn, whereas the usual off-play requires a complete shifting of the whole figure. The power of hitting in this form is very much greater; you have also far more reach and command; and you can command a ball, however little it rises, and though almost wide, to the off-side.

Felix was one of the most celebrated of our players for about twenty years, from 1834-1854, when he played his last match for Horsham against West Grinstead. After which he was afflicted in a way that must be told in his own truly characteristic terms, written in pencil on a book of scores containing this Horsham match and innings (31) now before me:

'Farewell! farewell!

'May 20th, 1857.

'I was most kindly admonished by Almighty God, being struck down by paralysis when in the enjoyment of good health.

'N. FELIX.'

Harassed by an action-at-law about some pictures, and working double tides to redeem his loss, poor Felix's o'er-wrought brain suffered paralysis. After a time

he could amuse himself with his pencil, and, living at Brighton, entertained his many old friends with his recollections of happy days gone by. The kindness and the sympathy of the many friends he had made wherever he appeared in the cricket-field found substantial expression in a collection to buy him an annuity, making him comfortable in his declining days.

His friend, Alfred Mynn (both were for some little time in Clarke's All-England Eleven, for with both pleasure at last spoilt business), had experienced the good-fellowship of the community of cricketers in the same substantial way. After his long and expensive illness, brought on, as related, by the accident at Leicester, he was voted a benefit, very well supported, at Lord's.

Felix was so great a favourite, and made so many friends at matches at Manchester among other places, that some merchants determined that they would retain so genial and musical companion among them, and offered their interest to secure him an appointment in the Customs worth £2000. a year. But unluckily the office was one which was not again filled up; otherwise Felix had never known the trouble that laid him low.

Other cases we could name in which the friendships of the cricket-as of the hunting-field have set men forward in professional life. Dr. E. M. Grace, I believe, has found that the sympathy and good-fellowship of old cricket-friends have every now and then lent him a help in professional life.

One word of Felix's opinion of William Clarke's bowling. 'The first match I played I scored freely from Clarke's bowling, and in my next match I was to meet Clarke

at Nottingham, on the side of the All-England Eleven, and found myself saluted on the ground as "Clarke's master." But this was a mistake indeed. I never mastered Clarke to the last. In this Nottingham match he took every wicket in his first innings, Pilch's included. Clarke could bowl four distinct kinds of balls. He said, "If a man is fast-footed he is ready-money to me; as he plays me forward I have practised a ball on purpose, and put on a screw that just misses his bat."

Of this Nottingham match Clarke once conversed with me and said, 'Mr. Felix stepped in and hit me the first ball; next ball he made a feint as if to do the same; but thinks I, You don't mean that, I know; so I sent in a fast over-pitched ball, and, as he was made up for back-play, he was taken by surprise, and knocked his own wicket down.'

Felix and Mynn were the great supports of the Gentlemen's Eleven for years; but as cricket supplanted business, latterly they joined Clarke, who found no slight advantage in having two men of their standing to meet the gentlemen of the different counties. Mynn's playing weight was from seventeen to eighteen stone, but after he was twenty stone he played in the All-England Eleven, and Parr said he still was worth playing, though double the weight of Caffyn at that time. Felix and Mynn were alike in this: their amiability and good-nature were perfect sunshine in the cricket-field; and if, as to moral qualities, I add to them the names of Cobbett and of Wenman, I should name two of the first players of my day, who as Nature's gentlemen have left the most pleasing recollection on all who ever played with them.

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Cobbett was one of the few all-round players—first-rate as bat, field, and bowler. Pilch said Wisden was the best all-round man of his day; one of the best judges in the Marylebone Club replied, ‘I thought you would have said Cobbett.’ How many other professional all-rounders have we had—really good at all points—Martingale, Dean, Caffyn, Griffiths, Hayward, Grundy, Hillier, Jackson, H. H. Stephenson, Tarrant, Oscroft.

As to Cobbett, first-class as a field, his batting was always valuable when runs were scarce and play difficult, but his bowling deserves some remark. Cobbett, like Lillywhite and Broadbridge, began as an underhand bowler, which I suspect is no bad beginning. Certainly every batsman should begin to play underhand bowling first—to learn good defence and straight play. Cobbett’s was the most easy and graceful, and by far the fairest of all bowlers. His hand was quite horizontal in the delivery, level perhaps with his elbow, but not the least above it. Then his wrist was thrown back at the last moment, and his fingers being lapped round the ball, the ball left his hand quite with the action of a man spinning a top. When I have blocked a shooter from Cobbett, the ball would continue spinning before my bat. Of course the result of this delivering was that his balls usually shot or rose abruptly in most erratic style, and if aided by the ground were difficult indeed. He did more with catches than with wickets, as compared with Lillywhite, whose glory it was to ‘dig them out’ and root up the stumps, never as pleased as when stumps and bails went flying. I have heard the old man say depreciatingly of bowlers, ‘O, they may catch ‘em out, or stump ‘em, or run ‘em out;

but I like to see ‘em clean bowled out.’

Cobbett almost always pitched true, but few consider how often great spin and rise of the ball make it miss the wicket. Cobbett was once tried with an undefended wicket, and much to his surprise he only hit the wicket once in six balls; but perhaps the ground or the novelty of the attempt was unfavourable to him.

This trial was made before members of the Moor Park Club, at Charlwood. Redgate, when their practice-bowler, was tried in the same way and with similar results. To pitch true to a wicket is one thing, to hit it another. Let me suggest to some of our few bowlers now—those who have good spin and bias, no others—to try the experiment before they draw any inference as to Cobbett and Redgate, very true bowlers both. Of course the bowling must be of fair length, and not be pitched up for the purpose.

This experiment was tried in consequence of an amusing after-dinner match at single wicket. A man, laughing at his friend’s bowling, offered to play him on these terms:

‘ You shall play as usual before the wicket, and I will play behind the wicket,’ meaning to place himself where long stop stands. Of course in that position every ball was a hit, of which he made not a few before the other could hit the undefended wicket.

As to Lillywhite, one day at Cambridge he backed himself to hit a wicket against the catapult, and won. But few nowadays have seen the old catapult. The ball, set on a block of wood, was struck by the recoil of a strong spring. You could set it to any length, and vary the power, but the precision was not exact. It was invented by Felix, and much

used to teach his friends and pupils at Blackheath. Cobbett died in 1842 of consumption, as did Dorrington, Lockyer, and Tarrant among others. For men of that tendency the heats and colds of the cricket-ground are trying. On a fine genial summer's day all is healthful enough; but snow hangs over head and sometimes falls in the month of May (witness Bloomsbury's and Hermit's snowy Derby-day), and fieldsmen are liable to stand shivering on wet grass in any bad season. Add to these causes of danger men continue to play too late in life, when no longer proof against sudden changes.

Two veterans, Jemmy Dean and Pagden, both famed in Sussex, made a single-wicket match, in 1871, when too old and heavy to run. Jemmy was to run his own hits, but Pagden, weighing about eighteen stone, was allowed a deputy; still this could not prevent his exertion as bowler in saving short runs. Jemmy, though carrying a fair rotundity of belly, his watch-chain plumping a perpendicular as he stood, made above fifty runs, and then knocked his own wicket down.

The amusing part was, that Jemmy had appeared at the wicket with two bats. 'What do you want with two bats?' we asked. 'Why, because I mean to stay in long enough to wear out one to be sure,' was the reply. Pagden was beaten in more senses than one—beaten physically as well as in a cricket sense.

Six months after, as I made inquiries, Dean said, 'I am sorry, sir, I played that match; I killed my man. Pagden was never well after it, and is now dead and buried.'

Jemmy Dean was a shrewd and amusing fellow, always in a good humour, and, like Ben Griffiths,

most popular with the ring, at Lord's and elsewhere. His name will be found in the scores of all the great matches from about 1837 to 1860. Both as long-stop and bowler he was first-rate. His balls rose very abruptly with a spin when the ground favoured him. He was an awkward bat, but did good service frequently, when 'Go it, Jemmy!' was the cry from the men of pewter and of pipes. He once said, 'Sir, that ball was such a shave that with another coat of paint I should have had your wicket,' and when asked why the manufacturing counties were so strong at cricket he said, 'You see, sir, that cricket is a gift; and there is such a blessed lot of them up there to have the gift.' One reason for the preëminence of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Nottingham is no doubt that those men can play not only enjoyably but profitably all the summer, and return to the factories in the winter; whereas in the agricultural counties cricket involves a sacrifice of employment, and we frequently see sad cases of used-up professionals. Even Pilch was in difficulties before he died; and not a few find that the usual resource of keeping a Bat and Ball public-house brings more temptations to drink than return for their little investment.

One more word of Jemmy Dean. This summer we were discussing the decided superiority of Mr. W. G. Grace over all the players we had ever known. 'No doubt, sir,' said Dean, 'Mr. Grace stands in a class of his own; but as to his many runs you must take into account that there is no break in his practice; early and late in the cricket season, and perhaps before, Mr. Grace is always playing. Now with most others there is a break and interruption; that takes the eye off the ball, and then the hand

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and eye do not act together. I have experienced this in my own case very often. You remember I used to keep my wicket up for hours even when I did not score much ; and I do assure you, sir, that by the middle of the season my eye was so clear and so steady *I could see the stitches on the ball.*' He added judiciously, 'It is the calm and steady eye that does it —the eye that does not wink but follows the ball right up to the bat. Why, lots of gentlemen I have bowled to shut their eyes when the ball pitched on the right spot.'

To Mr. Grace I would observe that as to his batting two points are almost peculiar to him : first, that in every position he is always seen with a bat perfectly straight—and playing nominally straight is another thing. When I heard this remark of Pilch and of Wisden and a few others, 'See how straight they play!' this bears witness to my remark that playing perfectly straight is a rare exception. I have seen Mr. Grace again and again save his wicket from a twisting ball just by an inch of the shoulder of his bat, when others not quite straight would certainly have lost a wicket. The second point is that Mr. Grace never plays wrong. When quite a boy (for he was in the Gentlemen's Eleven at seventeen years of age), after exulting in a fine hit, he was not to be tempted next ball in the exuberance of his spirits like other young players. He knew his reach, and would never risk a hit beyond it.

To these two points in Mr. Grace's play we must add another—the strength of constitution and the stamina that enable him to do no little of the bowling as well as of the batting in two matches a week all through the season. I remember one of the best of

Mr. Mitchell's Oxford Eleven who, after the London week of University matches, in which he fielded as cover-point, an anxious post, was so prostrated by over-excitement that he was obliged to lie by for a fortnight.

Others who show fatigue less lose their vital energy, however unconsciously, in different degrees. For this reason the hand and eye of a cricketer, as of a sportsman on the moors, often fail, he knows not why. Mr. Grace must suffer too more or less. Still the surprising point is that the balance of his energies yet remain enough for innings of three figures, and wickets in proportion.

While speaking of Ben Griffiths, let me record that he once hit Bennet's slow overhand bowling for four sixes, twenty-four runs, in one over. This we never knew equalled, though Mr. Thornton once scored twenty off one over from Mr. Buchanan. And Griffiths among the professionals and Mr. Thornton among the gentlemen are the two hardest hitters of my time ; I mean in their usual style of play. Griffiths, however, never seemed to exert himself or to play for sensational long hits. With Mr. Thornton, hard hitting appears his chief amusement at the wicket ; and be it observed, if a man is indifferent to defence and stands prepared for hitting only, most good players would hit hard. Still in Mr. Thornton's hittings there is something very remarkable ; his eye, and the timing of his hits, must be perfect to produce results so brilliant. When a boy, in the Eton Eleven, we must remember that he hit over the pavilion clean out of Lord's ; and these straight hits require positive strength. Mr. Thornton also hit one hundred and forty yards square to the leg at Canterbury ;

but such square hits are less a question of strength. But he also hit this year, before the Brighton Pavilion, over his bowler's head, one hundred and forty yards, clearing the entrance-gate into the road.

Mr. H. Fellows has hit as far as a hundred and thirty yards to long field; and several of that gentleman's hits used to be quoted as *ne plus ultra*. Among little men and light weights, Mr. F. Wright and Charlwood equal anything I remember. Height to a batsman is a great advantage; but if to these two we add the name of Mr. Mackinson's, we shall see that first-rate players may be of all weights and sizes. Few men play like Hayward and Daft, making the most of their height. These three batsmen play as tall in effect and with as much command as half the men in their respective eleven. One of the most efficient batsmen of this season, Mr. Webbe, has yet to learn to avail himself fully of his height, reach, and command, which in his case is the more desirable, as he has none to spare.

And here I may speak of remarkable feats with bat and ball.

Mr. Cazenove at Oxford bowled down five wickets in one over, a fifth ball being for once allowed by a mistake of the umpire.

Redgate bowled out Pilch, Mynn, and Stearman in one over.

Hill bowled and caught out Messrs. Hornby, Ridley, and W. G. Grace in one over.

Tom Adams got every wicket in both innings of the Zingari at Woolwich in 1849.

Dr. Grace got every wicket at Canterbury with slaws in one innings, after his innings of 200 runs.

Mr. V. Walker, in Surrey v. England in 1859, got every wicket in the first innings, and scored a

hundred and twenty-eight runs in the same match.

Wisden bowled out every one of the South Eleven while playing for the North in 1850.

Clarke bowled Day twenty-seven overs without a run in 1850.

Mr. G. Yonge bowled forty-five balls without a run to five of the All-England Eleven, and got one wicket.

Dean bowled fifty-seven balls against good men without a run.

Grundy has bowled eighty-four balls without a run to five of the All-England Eleven, and got one wicket.

Lillywhite and Broadbridge bowled eighty balls without a run to Pilch and Wenman.

Mr. Marcon bowled four wickets in one over against Swaffham in 1850.

Stephenson bowled out three of the Kent Eleven in three balls in 1858.

Atkinson, for the United v. All-England Eleven, in 1859, bowled thirty-six balls for three runs, and then bowled fifty-two balls for no run.

In the North v. Surrey, in 1857, when Surrey wanted only one run to tie, Jackson got out Stephenson, Miller, and Griffith in three successive balls, but others remained, and he could not save the match.

Next to Mr. W. G. Grace's innings, so well known, Jupp's carrying his bat out from first to last against Yorkshire, the strongest Eleven in England, in both innings, surpasses all in my recollection.

There is nothing more remarkable in cricket than in the effect of the mind on the play and also on the fortune of the match. I once asked Charles Taylor—I was at the time publishing the *Cricketer-Field*, and therefore compared ideas and experience with all who excelled in any particular point of the game—"Can you give me

any hints as to the captain's part in the game? 'The greatest point of all,' he replied, 'is to make all the eleven play their hardest and their best.' Yes, there is a certain earnestness, a *civida vis animi*, which has a marvellous effect on the energies of the field watching out, and a no less depressing influence on each man as he comes in. How often have we seen runs made at the rate of sixty or seventy an hour, when the cry is that only a dozen are wanted for a tie, and it takes half an hour to make that dozen, if indeed they are made at all! Again, we have seen maiden overs, or runs made with the greatest difficulty, when all of a sudden there has been a catch missed or an overthrow made, and at once the play seems slack, the charm is broken, and from that moment quick run-getting has been the order of the day.

The effect of mind is also shown where the field support the bowler. Never choose a bad fieldsman for his batting; the loss is felt not only in the balls he may fumble or the catches he may miss, but in the way he may paralyse the bowler and demoralise the whole side: few bowlers can do themselves justice, and no good bowler dares to try experiments when he doubts the support of his field.

The effect of mind is above all exemplified in that panic which sometimes ruins a match. 'Once establish a funk,' as the players say, 'and the men go down like nine-pins.' In the Oxford and Cambridge Match about five years since, two good men were well set and winning at seven o'clock, when time is usually called. The game seemed so hopeless to the Cantabs that they agreed as it were to go through the form of the thing till half-past seven, and

not waste the following day. Two wickets fell in the next five minutes; the rest went in with a bad light and nervously, and the game was lost by three runs. Of the ball that settled the last man, Mr. M. cried out, in his disgust, 'Why, I could have played such a ball as that with a broomstick!'

On account of the said effect of mind, I had rather play with ten earnest men than have an eleventh who smokes or chaffs or even looks indifferent; and I had rather see one match where men play heart and soul to win than ten matches of stale professionals who play as a matter of business, and never start till the ball is hit. County cricket should therefore be encouraged; for, in such matches only, except perhaps the matches of the Schools and of the Universities, are you likely to see good and earnest play.

It is the same mental energy that we miss, and which makes play less worth seeing towards the end of a season. We may have the same men who did much execution with bat or ball in the earlier matches; but as regards their play, their outplay especially, they are not worth by any means as much as before; nor would I go very far to see them. No; we want a superfluity of mental vigour for first-rate play. Charles Taylor always said he could not play 'Tophole a second match the same week.' Good play requires concentration. The same catch which would be made early in a game at point, or at slip, or short-leg especially, is missed later. Attention flags, and the mind is off the stretch. 'And so in long-stop's work,' said Mr. Hartopp: 'it is the end of an innings after the first hundred runs that tries the correct style of a long-stop; for if he does not

work easily to himself as a proficient, it is then that runs count apace.' Mr. Hartopp played as long-stop for nine years at Lord's. 'Harvey Fellows' long-stop' was the name he was once well known by from his effectual support to that terrific bowling.

Concentration is more particularly required in batting; and I believe that men are as often out because the mind tires as because the body is fatigued. The great secret is 'to watch them well.' Stand well up, as Daft does, and as Hayward used to do—and no two professionals played in a better style—and look well at the bowler. Never talk to the wicket-keeper or any one about you. Think only of playing the strict game. It is as necessary to preserve the mind as the body in its proper attitude. Above all, do not think or long for any ball to offer leg before it comes; if so, you are very likely to make a mistake, and a fatal one—and for this reason: the muscles act with the will, as in table-turning. You are told to wish the table shall turn to the right or left, and you unconsciously use your muscles in that direction. It is on the same principle that if you go in to bat, thinking many runs are wanted, you rarely play the same game. If you go in against the runs, for last innings, the mind is off its balance. You are not only more nervous but hurried, and play differently. You cease to play by habit; the mind begins to work, and there is a hesitation in your play. So true is this,

that with young players especially first innings is odds in favour of victory. I have observed that out of the first thirty-nine Public School matches the side that had first innings won twenty-seven, and the side which went in second only won twelve times. In the latter case each man feels the responsibility resting on himself individually, whereas with the other side it is divided with the whole field.

No doubt there are other reasons—one also what I term mental, namely, the discouragement when a long score is made against you; but we must allow sometimes for worse light and nearly always for worse ground, though the mental influence is paramount. Hence the importance of right habits of play. As you practice, so you will play. A rigid habit of playing the game, and nothing but the game, strictly, when you practise batting, will alone form a counterpoise to these tricks of fancy and betrayals of the mind. It is in vain to say, when hitting wildly, 'I should not do this, but play steadily in a game.' The muscles will twitch according to the habit that they have formed, and produce a fatal hesitation, if you do not play positively wrong, at that critical moment when the ball pitches. You find *one law*, or one tendency and inclination *in the mind*, and *another law* or tendency *in the members*, so that you cannot do what you would. A great moral principle is thus exemplified in our noble game.

SHE'S GONE.

LINES BY AN OFFICER TO HIS LADY-LOVE ON HER DEPARTURE FROM DOVER.

AND so you are gone from old Dover,
And a gloom has o'ershadow'd the sea ;
What you deem'd a flirtation is over,
But, alas, it was far more to me !
That face and that figure have vanish'd,
Those eyebrows and tresses are gone ;
From your thoughts I am probably banish'd,
And I loll by the sad waves alone.

In waltzing what foot could be fleetest ?
What step more entrancing than yours ?
What voice could be softer or sweeter ?
I thought all who danced with you boors.
And whenever I hear the ' Manolo,'
Which is quite forty times in each week,
Though it be in a scrimmage at polo,
Comes a blush of regret to my cheek.

I am wearied of pleasures and duties ;
Brother-officers jeer and upbraid ;
For, recalling your manifold beauties,
I tripp'd o'er my sword on parade.
I'm no flirt and no heartless deceiver,
But my love is so tender and true,
That I've just kiss'd my young sister Eva
Because she is something like you.

All the men whom I meet only mock me ;
All the ladies, too, vote me a bore ;
Their jests and their flippancies shock me,
For one, and but one, I adore.
No sights are to me worth the seeing,
For my life of its charm is bereft :
The brandy has gone from my being,
And only the soda is left.

SOME OLD SCOTTISH CELEBRITIES.

A Walk through the Raeburn Exhibition.

THERE is, perhaps, nothing more interesting than a pictorial history, as it were, of his own times, represented by a gallery of portraits from the hand of an eminent artist. Unfortunately such collections are rare, especially in Scotland; but one has just been brought together, from various sources, of the works of Sir Henry Raeburn, which has attracted considerable attention in the Scottish metropolis.

Portraiture may be said to have done for the wealthier classes of Scotland, from the time of Charles II. down to the second decade of the present century, what popular genealogies and biographical dictionaries have since accomplished in keeping alive the memory of persons more or less eminent in their day, but whose talents or opportunities have not gained for them a name in history, and who would have been consigned to the 'speechless past' but for the talent of the artist.

Prior to Raeburn, the few artists whom Scotland could claim as her own might be summed up in about a dozen names of little or no celebrity. At the same time, the works of Sir John Medina (comparatively little known), in the council-room of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, are of conspicuous merit, and represent, in an interesting series of portraits ranging over the period 1687-1707, those junior members of the leading territorial, but for the most part untitled, families who founded the college which has since acquired a European reputation.

But Medina's portraits do not comprise the variety which one finds in the Raeburn Gallery; for in the latter, not only distinguished Scotchmen, but many whose fame is rather imperial than local or national, are depicted with inimitable graphic force.

Henry Raeburn was born at Stockbridge, Edinburgh, on the 4th March 1756. His remoter progenitors are supposed to have been amongst those borderers who were husbandmen in peace and soldiers in war, according to the exigencies of the times, until the Act of Union. Robert Raeburn, settling at Stockbridge, became the proprietor of two mills; and by his wife, Ann Elder, had an elder son, William, and Henry, the subject of this paper. On the death of both parents, in 1762, the latter, who was by twelve years his brother's junior, was placed in Heriot's Hospital, where, according to his biographer, Allan Cunningham, 'he was trained both in morality and learning.' He was afterwards apprenticed to a goldsmith, for whose customers he painted miniatures, and, gradually stimulated by the example of Martin, who then resided in Edinburgh, he adopted the profession of artist.

In his twenty-sixth year, his romantic 'adventure with Miss Edgar, the daughter of Peter Edgar, Esquire, of Bridgeland's*

* Which he secured by marriage with Ann, daughter of Rev. John Hay, whose portrait is in the writer's possession. Peter was the younger brother of Alexander Edgar, of Auchingrammont, Lanarkshire, of a *Dunee* family derived from Wedderby.

[Peebles], by which he acquired a charming partner and an ample fortune,' is fully described by his biographer. But the story happens to be apocryphal; for at the time the lady, besides being the artist's senior by ten years, was the wife of Count James Leslie (representative of Leslie of New Leslie, and, in the female line, of Leslie of Leslie, &c.—facts which were omitted by the late Colonel Leslie, K.H.,* in his account of the House of Leslie), who, dying under tragic circumstances, his widow became the wife of the artist.

After his marriage he repaired to London, and, encouraged by Sir Joshua Reynolds, proceeded with his wife to Italy to study the works of the great masters.

At Rome he made the acquaintance of Gavin Hamilton, who gave him a piece of advice which, for the benefit of young artists, seems worthy of preservation—'Never copy from memory.'

Raeburn returned to Scotland in 1787, and set up as a portrait-painter in Edinburgh, where one of his earliest patrons was the enlightened John Clerk, Lord Eldin, who recognised the artist's talent, and lost nothing, at any rate in honourable fame, by his generous friendship.

In 1821 Raeburn was elected a Royal Academician of London, on which occasion, according to custom, he presented a work of art from his own pencil to the Royal Academy, and took for his subject his wife's grandson, Henry Raeburn Inglis,† holding a rabbit. To this child he was very much attached.

Between 1787 and 1795 there is no good account of the artistic productions of Raeburn, but still a sufficient number are known

and recognised as amongst his best.

At one time Raeburn thought of establishing himself in London, but was dissuaded from so doing by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

In 1822, on the last day of his memorable visit to Scotland, George IV., at Hopetoun House, conferred the honour of knighthood on Raeburn, then in his sixty-seventh year, the future baronet, then Mr. Secretary Peel, having previously intimated to him his Majesty's intention. He was at the same time appointed the royal painter for Scotland, or, as now designated, 'H. M.'s Limner.' Sir H. Raeburn did not long survive the honour conferred upon him; and died, somewhat suddenly, at St. Bernard's, in the suburbs of Edinburgh, on the 8th July 1823, in his sixty-eighth year.

'The first excellence of a portrait,' says the artist's biographer, 'is resemblance'; and in this respect Raeburn has not been surpassed. The admirable individuality of his portraits and their intensity of character, like those of Holbein, are at the same time associated with a masterly breadth of artistic treatment. His drawing was correct, his colouring rich and deep, and the light disposed with a peculiar and powerful effect, amounting almost to mannerism, but not the less admirable. He was essentially the portrayer of intellect, and had the talent of investing with this attribute, yet without sacrificing resemblance, even what might be considered a dull subject. It is said that the arrangement of a 'fold of drapery occasioned him more perplexing study than a head full of thought and imagination'; and such was the intuition with which he penetrated at once the mind, that the first sitting rarely came to a close without his having seized strongly

* He was only a Leslie in the female line.

† Still living.

on the character and disposition of the individual. In the present exhibition these excellences are generally recognised by those who personally remember, or from other sources have become acquainted with, the characteristics of the originals.

It was a peculiarity of this artist that 'he never drew in his head, or indeed any part of the body, with chalk,' but with a few bold touches, as he stood—for he always painted standing and without any rest for his hand—he first of all produced the forehead, chin, nose, and mouth, and then proceeded to treat the other parts of the face, as it were, subjectively, to these salient points, reserving for a later process that breath of life, speaking in the eyes, which tells us of the living soul within.

Although possessing varied acquirements, remarkable regularity in his system of artistic labour (as may be inferred from the number of his works), Raeburn was but an indifferent 'man of business.' He kept no regular list of his own productions, and, in consequence, a complete enumeration of them has not yet been accomplished; and although the present collection comprises no fewer than 322 portraits, it is well known that there are many more scattered about the kingdom, in the possession of private families.

Art has its 'obligations' as well as 'property,' and is bound to make itself intelligible to the uneducated as to the educated eye. There are styles of art, however, which, in order really to appreciate, one must be gifted with a peculiar idiosyncrasy. But the works of Raeburn, now being exhibited in Edinburgh, please alike the most fastidious and the most superficial eye.

The great Scottish portrait-

painter, with cultivated tastes, an agreeable manner, a handsome person, and a wife wanting neither in beauty nor fortune, seems to have escaped the fate of many whose genius has been cramped at the outset of their career, and who, as has been said of Burns, while living asked for bread and received a stone when gone; and we may imagine the pleasant surprise of the kind Sir Joshua Reynolds, when offering the young Scotch artist aid to prosecute his studies in Italy, on being told that it was not required.

With all these advantages Raeburn could afford to give scope to his genius, as his joyous children and charming ladies fully attest. Indeed, the agreeable conversation, in which he is said to have engaged his sitters, probably contributed in no slight degree to evoke that intellectuality of expression which pervades all his likenesses. His judges seem all to have a clear conscience, and to be enjoying the fruits of their judicial labours; his soldiers and sailors, *sans peur et sans reproche*, are perfectly satisfied with 'the authorities' of their day; the country gentlemen have been undisturbed by elections or mortgages; and his literary men appear as though on the best of terms with their publishers; while his nobles seem fully conscious of their hereditary claims to respect. One and all might be the citizens of a Utopia which history, unfortunately, has ignored. But at the same time they are all men and women of flesh and blood, with marked individuality; and if on any brow are traced the lines of care, better times seem to have come; and all are represented in their best aspects, the animal nature being entirely subordinated to the spiritual and intellectual, under the

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powerful charm of that ideality with which they have been invested by the rare genius of the artist.

Thus, in the contemplation of upwards of three hundred and twenty portraits in the Royal Academy National Galleries, the visitor feels satisfied in every instance of the verisimilitude, while applauding the triumphs, of the artist.

There are few what may be called 'vulgar' and uninteresting faces in this remarkable collection; and in those of men of public note, their biographers seem justified in their most partial delineations of character.

Of the portraits of ladies in the present collection conspicuous by their beauty, apart from artistic treatment, there are three which might well perplex the critical Paris. Their dresses are alike, white; they are equally refined; and the artist appears to have done the fullest justice to each.

Lady Montgomery, queen-like, stands beneath the spreading boughs of a tree—a form of delicate symmetry, with a countenance expressive at the same time of gentleness and of consciousness of dignity.

Mrs. Houston of Clerkington, so life-like in the inimitable *pose* of the figure, seems to be 'feeding deep thought with many a dream' in her sylvan retreat.

The third is the equally youthful Jacobina Leslie, daughter of Count Leslie (Lady Raeburn's first husband) and wife of Daniel Vere of Stonebyres, the last representative in the male line of an ancient English family, for centuries resident in Lanarkshire.* One can scarcely be reconciled to the thought that such beauty should ever have faded, and that

so bright and amiable an expression should ever have been clouded by sorrow. There is probably no finer example of Raeburn's mastery of the subtleties of expression than in this portrait of his step-daughter, radiant in the perfect innocence of smiles, which are tender rather than mirthful.

Amongst the portraits of ladies past the early morning of their charms is an exquisite and thoroughly characteristic full-length of Lady Raeburn, the artist's wife. She is sitting with folded arms in a meditative mood; a kerchief is tied round her head, and she slightly leans against a garden-wall. In her handsome features may be discovered a resemblance to those of her mother, Ann Hay, whose portrait is extant.

Another, although only to the waist, is Anne Erskine, daughter of John Erskine of Dun and wife of John Wanhoppe; a beautiful head—the tints admirable and life-like, while a green scarf, crossed on the bust, gives a peculiar and attractive effect to the portrait, the tone of which is remarkably rich and warm.

A group of Margaret Countess of Dumfries and Lady Elizabeth Penelope Crichton, in a garden, is full of grace. Lady Hume Campbell, with her infant son on her knee, is a charming classic figure, and might have been taken from some Greek intaglio. Mrs. Gordon of Aikenhead is represented as a handsome woman, in puce and white delicately blended. Mrs. Kennedy of Dunure, in a pale neutral-green dress, is finely toned. In the portrait of Mrs. Gregory there is a graceful arrangement of the hands. Anne, eldest daughter of the Right Honourable Robert Blair of Avontoun and wife of the second Lord Meadowbank, is a charming figure, with

* He lost his beautiful ancestral estate through a family misfortune, and died in comparative poverty.

a refined and somewhat fastidious expression of countenance ; the arrangement of brown and white in the costume is pleasing. Lady Maitland, wife of Admiral Sir F. Maitland, is rich in colouring ; and the portrait of Mrs. Robert Bell has the same excellence. A full-length of Miss Harriet Maxwell of Pollock is full of youthful grace.

The wife of the ninth Lord Torphichen (a family unique in its descent from a grandmaster of the Templars) is in itself an admirable portrait. That of Mrs. Durham of Largo has been refreshed ; and although the lady herself can scarcely be called beautiful, the artist has shown the wonderful mastery of colour which he possessed. Two heads of ladies of the family of Sir George Luttie, Bart., are also fine specimens.

In the portraits of elderly ladies Raeburn has been singularly happy. In these the absence of youth is more than compensated by the high-bred air and intellectuality with which he has, with so much delicacy of perception, invested his subjects.

Conspicuous amongst these are the Hon. Mrs. Erskine, granddaughter of the third Lord Reay, with her hands crossed, the beau-ideal of aristocratic composure ; Mary Preston, daughter of Sir George Preston, Bart., of Valleyfield, and wife of Robert Wellwood, in a pale primrose Indian shawl and close cap, bespeaks her proud lineage ; Murray Kynymond Edmonstone, wife of Buchanan of Arnrior, with arms exposed and a close-fitting black coiffure, as a portrait is an excellent example of the artist's command of light and shade.

But it is necessary to pass on to another class, merely referring by the way to the many artless and happy faces of children which

Raeburn seems to have painted with characteristic feeling ; such, for example, as 'A young Girl sitting, leaning on a Portfolio,' a pretty little boy, in nankeen, evidently

'Wandering through the wood,
To pluck the primrose gay.'

the angelic beauty of the infant son of James Edgar of Auchin-grammont, 'Master William Blair' ; Helen, daughter of Robert Stirling (of Keir ?) ; and 'Colonel John Scott Lindsay when a boy,' rich in the treatment of peculiar colour, and perfect in the flesh-tints.

The Scottish bench is represented by some of the finest portraits in the collection. One of the most striking of these, although in a very subdued tone, is that of the second President (of the Court of Session), Dundas. The head is full of character and ability. Although not one of the best examples of the management of light and shade, the finish and delicacy with which details are given remind one of Holbein. 'The Right Hon. Robert Blair of Avontoun' represents one accustomed to command. John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldin, is remarkable chiefly for fine effect of colouring. Baron Hume is a fine study of light and shade. Lord Jeffrey is represented as rather intellectual and somewhat cynical than powerful. Lord Braxfield scarcely realises the encomiums of Lord Cockburn ; and the latter is not one of the best of Raeburn's portraits. Lord Frederick Campbell, robed in black and gold, is magnificent.

The celebrated Dugald Stewart and Professor Playfair derive an interest chiefly from their fame ; while Henry Mackenzie, author of the *Man of Feeling*, is an admirably life-like portrait, rich in colour and tone. Sir John Sin-

clair, Bart., of Ulbster, a laborious topographer, has a handsome countenance. Home, author of *Douglas*, is a disappointing face. Dr. Hugh Blair, whose sermons were once so popular, is life-like; and still more remarkable is the almost speaking portrait of Dr. Adam, author of *Roman Antiquities*. Francis Horner and Archibald Constable, the well-known publisher, are vigorously delineated, as is also Neil Gow, the celebrated violinist.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the well-known portraits of Sir Walter Scott, sitting beside a ruin, and of Raeburn himself are admirable.

Patrick Earl of Dumfries and Flora Countess of Loudon is a striking group; and in the same style that of John Tait* of Hareston (the Archbishop of Canterbury's progenitor) and his grandchild is scarcely inferior.

Amongst the larger and more conspicuous full-length portraits are the following: The Earl of Rosebery, in his green robe, as Knight of the Thistle, one of the finest efforts of the great painter. The figure is commanding, but the face rather jovial than dignified. Henry Viscount Melville, robed, is extremely fine. There is a melancholy interest attached to the portrait of Lord William Russell. Lieut-General A. M. Fraser of Castle Fraser, in scarlet uniform, although unfinished, is wonderfully effective. The Laird of Macnab, in full military highland costume, is full of character, and as an example of rich and effective colouring unsurpassed. The well-known portrait of Nathaniel Spens of the Royal Scot-

* Margaret Edgar, Lady Raeburn's sister, married Mr. Tait's brother, and was mother of the late George Tait, adv., sheriff sub., of Edinburgh, and sometime Lyon Depute (1817).

tish Archers, in a green uniform, in the act of drawing his 'arrow to the head,' is too well known to require comment. Macdonell of Glengarry is represented with all the vigour of his race. While McDonald of St. Martin's indicates a man of enlarged mind. The Earl of Hopetoun, in the uniform of a general officer, standing beside his charger, is the best of the equestrian portraits. Sir John Sinclair, Bart., as colonel of the Rothesay and Caithness Fencibles, as an example of colouring, is amongst the best, while the man himself looks every inch a soldier.

But in this class of portraits two of the very finest, and certainly most interesting, are those of the heroic Admiral Lord Duncan and Sir F. Maitland, of the Bellerophon, to whom the great Napoleon surrendered.

Two heads must not, however, be left unnoticed, for, as works of art, they are unsurpassed in this collection. These are David Stewart, Earl of Buchan, the rich tone and carnation tints of which are exquisite, and Mr. Wardrop of Torbane-hill, a head that would bear a comparison with Rembrandt.

In so extensive a collection of the works of one artist, it is difficult to make a selection, where none is unworthy of notice, and the more so, as it is not always in the most celebrated of his subjects that the best efforts of Raeburn may be recognised.

As an artist, Scotland may well be proud of him who gave her sons and daughters, above all, the stamp of intellectual superiority, and whose genius never succumbed to the meretricious styles which society has subsequently so often demanded as the tax on talent.

J. H. L. A.

A HARVEST-HOME ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

THE LAKE AND ITS GIANTS—THE FIRST GREETING OF THE SOUTH—THE EDEN OF THE PAYS DE VAUD—VEVAY—THE ABBEY OF THE VINTAGERS OF VEVAY AND THEIR FESTIVAL—THE CARAVANSERAI FOR TOURISTS AT MONTREUX AND VEVAY—CHILLON AND BONNIVARD—THE PLACE OF THE FESTIVITIES—THE CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN AND THE TOMBS OF THE REGICIDES—HOTEL MONNET—AN EVENING ON ITS TERRACE.

It was morning, a morning 'in the merry month of May,' and after a long unpleasant journey by night I was still wedged in the densely packed Swiss coach with the inevitable tinkling of its bell-bearing horses.

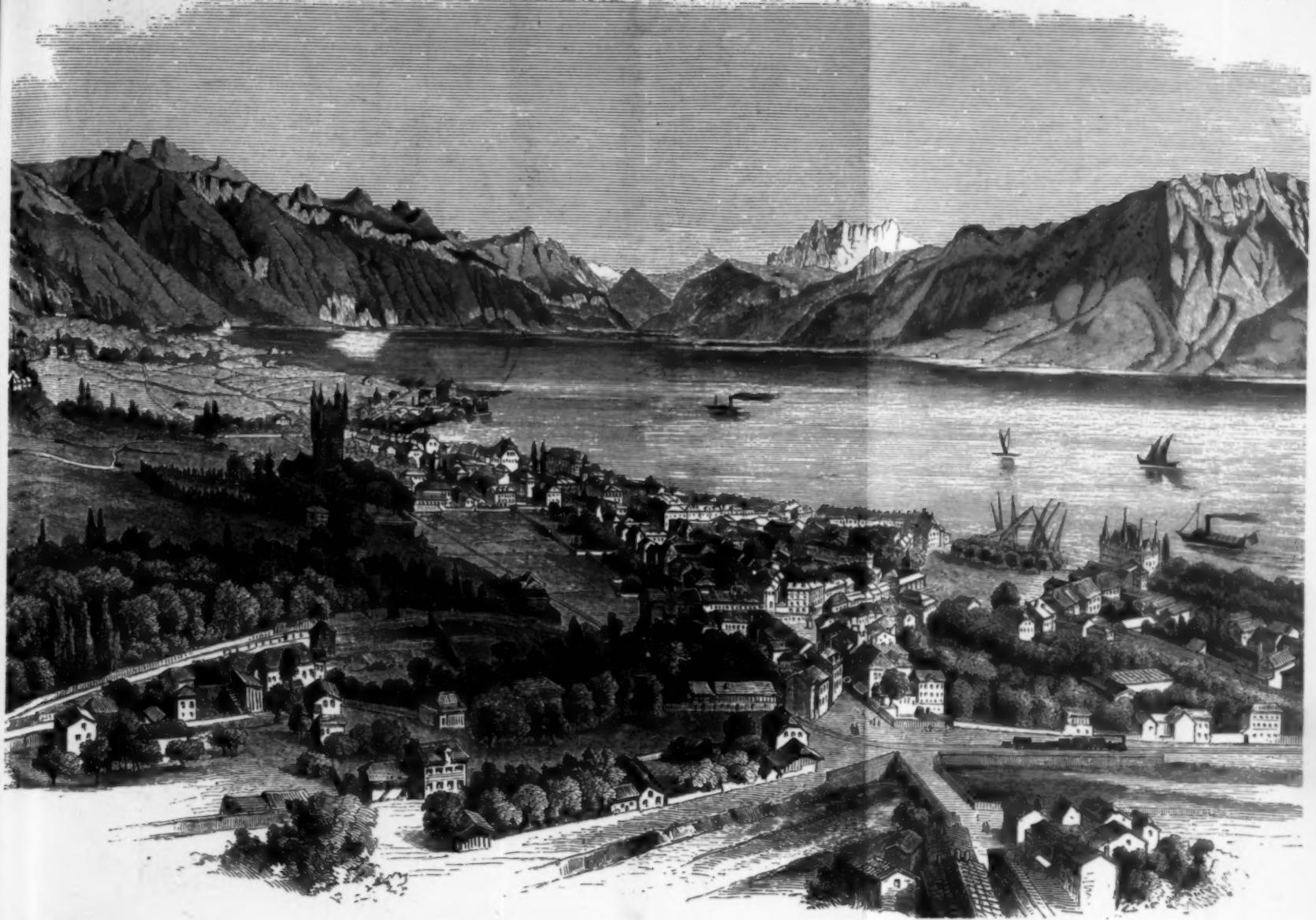
On the preceding evening, while it was pouring with rain, I had got into the roomy vehicle which at that time still stood in the dark court-yard of the 'Gerechtigkeitsgasse' at Bern. By daybreak we reached the ridge of a desolate mountain range, and sometimes passed through patches of woodlands, sometimes over bare heaths and peat-fields. We were on the moderately rising heights connecting the Jura with the Alps, a landscape having no special attraction, only sparsely dotted, in the vicinity of Friburg, with farmsteads neither over-clean nor comfortable. On passing a small lake, gracefully spreading its clear sea-green waters into the trough of a valley, running parallel with the road, and its scattered groups of more comfortable-looking houses, we skirted abruptly the projecting ledge of the mountain range precipitously dipping towards the south. While still half-asleep I was suddenly startled by my neighbour, a pretty peasant-girl from the Rhone valley, laying hold of my arm as she exclaimed, 'Monsieur, Monsieur, voilà le lac, le lac!' as if there were only one lake in the world, whereas we

had already passed two on our journey.

There indeed lay this lake, this truly unique lake, far, far below us and our movable habitation. Emerging from the unfolding mists, it gradually disclosed feature by feature, till, resplendent in beauty, glowing and sparkling, one portion after another of this heavenly landscape became visible—an Eden in truth, if Nature unassisted can create such.

At our feet lay the vast lake of many shades of blue, flashing with countless thousands of glittering lights. Beyond rose the frozen spires of the heaven-aspiring Alps. First, the Alps of Savoy intersecting the ether with innumerable jagged weather-beaten pinnacles, the highest still glowing with the rose-like hue of morning; adjoining them, the alps of the Valais and the gigantic Dent du Midi, extending as far as the great St. Bernard, where the projecting peak of Mont Catogne and the snow-covered pyramid of the Velan seem to bar and enclose the valley.

How describe, however, the beauty of the banks whose colouring, foliage, and vegetation already breathe of the South! This, indeed, is the first greeting of the sunny South, whither we—all who are born in the pallid North—are instinctively drawn with the self-same impulse that once drove whole tribes and na-



VEVAY: A HARVEST HOME ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA

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tions from their homes on a long perilous pilgrimage to the far-off southern lands. In the midst of this indescribable splendour hundreds of white gleaming houses are scattered between the vines and walnut-trees ; some massed together in a good-sized town, overtopped by a quadrangular church-tower resembling a Norman castle ; some divided into smaller groups, being sometimes on a level with the lake and sometimes situated half-way up the mountains ; while, floating on the water behind us, was an antique labyrinthine building, of which I had already seen many a picture.

And ever prettier and prettier grew the villages through which we drove ; ever denser the foliage twining round them ; ever more luxuriant the shrubs of blossoming jasmine and roses climbing round the open verandahs of the houses, till the scene seemed in truth a *Fata Morgana!* The road led down in a steep zigzag to that queen of the lake, clean, busy, smart Vevay, whose peculiar quadrangular church-tower I have already alluded to ; at every bend of the road the panorama changed its aspect, always remaining equally beautiful.

A festival is held in this paradise of the Pays de Vaud, Vevay, on Lake Leman, as incomparable in its way as the scene where it is held. This festival has nothing in common with gymnastic sports or with gatherings of archers and singers. Properly speaking it is not a national festival with political tendencies in the background ; its holiday-makers do not count by thousands or come from all parts of the world as to those other gatherings ; nevertheless it is visited by troops of strangers, not only from the different cantons of Switzerland, but from remote foreign parts—by people, in fact,

of all the nations that contribute their share to the travellers and tourists of our day.

Yet in reality it is nothing but a kind of harvest-home. A feast before the harvest, however, in which a happy people rejoices at the blessings it possesses in a climate and soil which have raised it to an enviable degree of prosperity and civilisation—a climate where people's thoughts naturally centre in the vine and its cultivation ; where the Alpha and Omega of life consist in the preparation and consumption of wine ; where aspects of Nature, changes of weather, even political events, are first of all judged in connection with their influence on the vine, its growth and profitable disposal ; where, even for the poorest, wine is no unattainable luxury but a daily comfort. Where such is the case, it need not surprise us that in the course of centuries the vintage should have assumed proportions which make an event of its recurrence — make it in fact one of the most magnificent spectacles of Europe, for which preparations are made years beforehand, and months in advance fills the entire population with expectation and excitement. Most of my readers have probably already heard of this great vintage feast, or, according to its official and solemn appellation, the *Festival of the Confraternity of Vintagers of Vevay*—in truth a pagan festival of Bacchus and Ceres, celebrated at irregular intervals in this most Christian corner of the earth.

The brotherhood, or *abbaye*, of the vintagers of Vevay owes its name no doubt to the Monastery of Haut Crêt, in the canton of Friburg, whose monks in the twelfth century planted the first vines on the northern banks of the Lake of Geneva, the rock of

La Vaux, which wakes sweet reminiscences or hopes in every judge of wines. The object of this *abbaye* of vintagers was originally confined to the cultivation of the vine. He who distinguished himself particularly by his care of it received certain prizes and rewards, which were distributed every three or four years at Vevay. Rural festivals, accompanied by songs and processions, were usually held in connection with this distribution of prizes; and from these modest beginnings the imposing festival gradually grew, which was celebrated for the first time in 1851. During the 26th and 27th of July a stream of visitors overflows the elegant town of Vevay, doubling and trebling its population.

The leading feature of this festival is a procession of vintagers, where pagan traditions are blended with Christian elements, and mythological allegories alternate with mediæval tableaux, where Bacchus even to this day immediately precedes St. Urban, the patron-saint of the ancient monastery, the so-called 'abbot' thus strutting as high-priest of Bacchus behind the god of the master of the corporation. Ceres, as the representative goddess of summer, also appears in the procession; then follow groups illustrative of national manners and pursuits, some being shepherds and hunters, others reviving memories of national glory, such as the old Swiss guard, each group having music and songs of its own. All these preparations are made a year in advance. A dancing-master is engaged to invent the various steps and figures of the dances as afterwards executed in front of the raised seats. The best musicians, not only of the canton but of Switzerland, had to supply the music; and the sums of money spent on the vari-

ous costumes were such as no Court theatre could have afforded to pay for its operas or ballets.

An interesting historical study might be made by comparing the gradual development of this festival from a simple vintage to its present complicated processions and representations, for which no less than thirteen hundred men and women are required. The change of the times, as shown in the different representations and costumes, could thus be clearly traced. It would seem that since 1791 the artistic element became predominant to a degree till then unheard of, each recurring festival far outshining the preceding one by its splendour and magnitude. The festival, however, would never have become what it is had it not been for its locality, the magic of one of the finest landscapes, which is year after year the goal and meeting-place of tourists of all cultivated nations. In other cases it is usually the festival which imparts some importance and interest to the place where it is held; whereas here, on the contrary, the place is the leading feature—the frame contributing most towards the making of the picture which thousands now admire. Our present description also deals principally with the seat of this festival, or rather the landscape generally. We will try to explore more fully the delightful vicinity, at present resounding with the jubilee of this rare festival.

We are standing just now on the last terrace leading from Friburg to the lake, on the slope of the so-called Pilgerberg (Mont Pelerin), one of the mountains of the Jorat range rising close on the north of Vevay. From about this position, only inclining a little more towards the valley, the view has been taken adorning our pre-

sent number. Although the cold woodcut cannot possibly render the bloom, the softness, the colour, and the breath of the South, in which the original scene is steeped, it will nevertheless impart some notion of this true Elysium of creation, this union of grandeur and loveliness, which Nature has scarcely succeeded in reproducing twice or thrice in equal perfection. Let us, however, in all comfort take a good look at this splendid panorama by entering the house which we are just passing. The Hôtel Bellevue at Chardonne beyond Vevay is a famous place, a great resort of strangers from all countries. Let us step through the pleasant garden in which it stands with its *dépendances* and *châlets*, and taking a seat in the verandah, order a bottle of old Yvorine of 1854. There in front of us lies the panorama which the artist has sketched, and involuntarily we utter an exclamation of admiration, and then remain silent for a long while, gazing in devout enthusiasm at the landscape stretched out before us. What words, indeed, could depict its splendour? We will content ourselves therefore with simply noting down what we see.

First, then, the mountains on the opposite shore, those mighty giants — bold, jagged, heaven-scaling, wildly cleft and variously outlined—we know them already; it is the same tremendous Alpine group which we already saw from the heights. To the right tower the mountains of Savoy, and again to their left the giants of the lower Valais. Still farther to the left the Alps of the Pays de Vaud descend sheer to the lake, being split at the summit into countless bare and rocky peaks and pinnacles, while their base is covered with the luxuriant wealth of southern vegetation, with groves

of chestnut-trees and walnut-woods and vineyards.

It is there that the southern character of the Pays de Vaud becomes manifest; that the continuous garland of pleasant places takes its beginning, which, partly situated on the coy bays of the lake, partly in shady dells, partly on gently inclined hills, are usually known to the foreigner by the common appellation of Montreux, which is in truth only one, although one of the first, of this incomparable string of pearls. The country between Montreux and Vevay is simply a great caravanserai for tourists, a refuge for the consumptive and for patients to whom the grape-cure has been prescribed. So that hotel adjoins hotel, boarding house boarding house, and country seat country seat. From the picture before us we cannot see how varied—*accidenté* as the French happily express it—the aspect of the landscape is, how a romantic ravine discloses itself here where picturesque houses and villas nestle cosily, while yonder rises a height crowned by a stately castle. Then again in the midst of vineyards predominating everywhere you suddenly come upon a meadow on which a model farm is situated in true Swiss fashion, or a village lying on a plateau looks towards the Gruyère Alps as well as towards the water and the opposite shore, and the brown herdsman's cottages nod from the mountains—in fact the reader must take my word for it when I tell him that even the traveller who has been far and wide and seen many lands has hardly anywhere else come upon such a scene.

Before reaching this enchanting region, farther in the background, where the lake, piercing into the land, forms a deep dark blue bay,

the eye is caught by an unwieldy structure seemingly floating on the waters, and just there lit up by the setting sun. This is Chillon, the ancient castle and fortification of Chillon. Who has not heard of Chillon, once the Castle of Savoy, which, like a gloomy legend amidst a garland of sweet love-songs, rises threateningly above the exquisite landscape? What a terrible history has this dark castle surrounded by water! Deep below the level of the lake lay the dungeons where the prisoners languished through long, long years, most of them destined never to see the daylight more, but to perish in the deep waters.

In one of those horrible dungeons the well-known Bonnivard, once Prior of St. Victor at Geneva, was imprisoned for eight years, fastened to a pillar, so that the print of his unchanging steps was graven in the stone-floor, where it is still shown to all the visitors of the castle. It is true that modern historical research has despoiled Bonnivard of his aureole; nevertheless the fate of the thinker must always stir our deepest pity. Thus Byron's pathetic poem, which is indelibly fixed in the memory, will always, despite of recent research, represent him to the most distant generations as a martyr of political and religious liberty.

The railway from Vevay to the valley of the Rhone now passes close by Chillon, the modern-looking station being in the immediate vicinity of the mediæval stronghold, which is now the military dépôt and state prison of the Pays de Vaud, thus depriving it to some extent of the romance and poetry attaching to it.

We have now, in our survey, come to that point in the great semicircle where the town is situated, partly built on the point

of the cape, and partly on the banks of the lake and narrow plain, winding along the foot of the vineyards, some of the streets even touching the lowest terraces of the latter. Correctly speaking, two towns are spread out before us so distinctly that we can almost distinguish each particular house, but they appear like one from the height whence we see them, being in reality quite near to one another, although consisting of two perfectly distinct communes. To the left is the little town La Tour de Peilz, which derives its name from a neighbouring round tower, once the seat of the Dukes of Savoy, and situated on the very edge of the lake. This little town is specially distinguished for the celebrated educational establishment of the excellent German, Mr. Eduard Sillig. To the right lies the town of Vevay itself, 'the queen of the lake,' as the inhabitants are wont to call it, the second town of the Pays de Vaud in rank, but the first in wealth and traffic; for its commerce and industry produce considerable sums, and large fortunes are frequently made. Wine is naturally the chief commodity of the place, commercially speaking. Of about 75,000 chars or carts (a char containing four hundred quarts) which are produced on an average in the Pays de Vaud, nearly one-half are obtained from the neighbourhood of Vevay. But the trade in the famous Gruyère cheese, carried on with the neighbouring canton of Friburg (Vevay affording the most convenient harbour), is of considerable importance, as is likewise the manufacture of cigars in the town itself. The 'Vevay sans' and 'Vevay fins' are cigars not only sought after in Switzerland itself, but justly renowned far beyond its boundaries.

The pleasure is subdivided into the 'Belvédère' right of the square opposite south, and a Gothic tower of a richly decorated thickly wooded it. Yonder market-place with its surrounding places square parts for us, for great vine-mass are erected of strange fashion on the at half-past the page Spring, followed and last cities, with presents past several distributed eleven characteristic in the scene finest effect the ever gondolas which reflected; fancy-bat ties, on day, is a being made blaze of ing up to

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The chief groups into which the pleasing, even stately, town is subdivided at once strike our attention, where we are seated on the 'Belvedere.' First, to the right of the picture, we see a large square opening on the lake to the south, and shut in to the west by a Gothic castle, the dwelling-place of a rich gentleman, and by a thickly wooded grove adjoining it. Yonder is the harbour and market-place, the Place du Marché, with its fruit-stalls, and the landing-place of the steamers. This square possesses a special interest for us, for it is the scene of the great vintage feast. On this immense square the grand-stands are erected, whence the concourse of strangers watches the procession on the 26th of July. There, at half-past six in the morning, the pageantry begins; first comes Spring, then Ceres or Summer, followed by Bacchus or Autumn, and lastly come marriage festivities, with groups of hunters representative of Winter. At half-past seven the various prizes are distributed, and from eight to eleven dancing and singing, characteristic of the feast, take place in the same spot. There also the finest effect is obtained, when in the evening the row of lit-up gondolas moves on the lake in which the illuminated town is reflected; and lastly the great fancy-ball concluding the festivities, on the night of the second day, is also given here, its effect being most magical, owing to the blaze of lights and fireworks lighting up the scene.

On this very square Napoleon reviewed fifteen hundred of his troops before crossing the snow and rock-covered wilderness of the great St. Bernard, on his way to the victory of Marengo.

A dense avenue, protected against the waves by a high

wall, adjoins the Gothic or semi-Gothic palace which decorates the square, and runs for a good stretch alongside the lake, a finer walk being not easily conceivable.

If we now turn inland we are principally attracted by the peculiar quadrangular tower of a church with its four pointed turrets. Another classical and renowned object, well known to every tourist, is the Church of St. Martin, with its churchyard and terrace shaded by lime- and chestnut-trees. Any one who has only passed a day in Vevay is certain to go up the hill of St. Martin, and silently revel in the magnificent landscape spread out before him, till startled from his self-forgetfulness by the snorting of the train which passes close under the Terrace du Panorama; he will then very probably turn into the cool church, and look for the tombstones of two exiles who died far from their own country—the tomb of E. Ludlow, one of the judges of Charles I. of England, and that of his friend, Andrew Broughton, who read the sentence of death to the unfortunate Stuart.

Another edifice, almost in a direct line with this church, only close to the shore, next attracts our attention by its resemblance to a luxurious princely villa; it is, however, the Gasthof Monnet, or Hôtel des Trois Couronnes, favourably mentioned by all guide-books as being one of the so-called Swiss model hotels; a consecrated place, at any rate, under whose roof we also will seek rest tonight.

In the mean while we have already emptied our second bottle of Yvorne; but it is difficult to tear ourselves away from the panorama before us, although it is getting on towards evening. To

the right, in the direction of Geneva, the sun's fiery disc rests on the gentle undulating lines of the Jura, the lake is bathed in golden light, a sunny mist quivers like an aureole above the town; and to the left, on the ice-covered summits of the Valais, already floats the rose-bloom of evening, which, rising higher and higher, is gradually transformed into the enchanting apparition known as the Alpine glow, the ridges and ravines at the foot of the mountains being in the mean while wrapped in deep purple shadows of a warmth unknown in the North. It is time, at last, for us to descend into the valley.

There are nothing but vineyards round about us whose salient terraces slope towards the lake, their walls at the same time forming a path for us. A low west wind drives the vine-leaf, the emblem of the country, right across our path, and everywhere in the different vineyards the dressers are still at work. The first houses of the town stand close to the foaming Vevayse, whose source is in the hills of Friburg; they are mostly painted white, with green blinds and widely projecting roofs, half Swiss and half Italian in style, but thoroughly pretty and inviting, being usually covered by most luxuriant vegetation. On first

entering its streets and lanes we feel at home in the place, and even the sour-sweet odour, exhaled by the many wine-cellars and their barrels and butts, appears to us only a fresh enjoyment added to the poetic South.

Soon after, we are installed on the terrace of the *Trois Couronnes*, eating our supper amidst the polyglot hum of talk of English, French, Russians, Germans, and Swiss; and now, as the moon rises to our left above the peaks of the *Tour d'Ai*, trailing her faint silver in thousand lines and gleams of light across the lake and the foaming waters left by the gondolas, softly gliding in the cool night-air across the wavelet mirror, while yonder, on the shore of Savoy, the chalk-kilns near St. Gingolph glow like fiery discs through the darkness, I am overcome by sorrowful regret that all this lies only before the mental eye of the reader, that there is no magic wand in this arbour by which I might instantaneously transport him to this paradise of Vevay, instead of owning no sway save over pen, pencil, and printing-press, so that I am only able to make him see the great vintage festival on paper; paper being the most characteristic promulgator of the spirit of our times.

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THE VISITS OF MAJOR GUBBINS TO HIS ACQUAINTANCES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'HEDED WITH THORNS,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

HE INTRODUCES HIMSELF.



DON'T mind saying who I am. I am Major Gubbins, late of the Honourable East India Company's Service. Just before that illustrious body became extinct the mystic word 'liver' was whispered into my ear. I certainly could not help seeing that I was getting very yellow ; curry, rupees, and niggers were all very well, but ease and rest were better. I thought of the Junior United Service Club, of the comfortable arm-chairs, of the mullagatawny-soup ; so I made my bow, and retired into private life. On the whole I have not regretted this step. I interfere with no one ; no one interferes with me. I sit in the club-window and watch the passers-by. The servants know me ; they run when I call. I hear them whisper, 'There is Major Gubbins.' I generally manage to be one of the first who get the *Times*, and I always keep it as long as I possibly can. After tossing about in the world for so many years, I have made a good many friends — stay, I won't say friends, that word must be considered blotted out. I don't believe in friends—acquaintances ; yes, that is better. I have made a good many acquaintances, fellows that say to me when we meet, 'Ah, Gubbins, is that you ? Glad to see you, old boy.'

I don't know why they should say 'old boy,' for when this moustache is well waxed, and touched up with a little reviver—that is *not* a dye—I look as young as any of them. If I think it worth while, I answer, 'This is a . . . quite an unexpected . . . pleasure. Come and dine with me this evening at the old place, and let us have a talk about Jubbulpore or Ahmednuggur.'

They are almost sure to come. I seldom have more than two, and I take care to ask none of your harebrained scapegraces, who would be likely to say, 'Gubbins, could you oblige me with five pounds till Friday ?' or 'Gubbins, do put your name to this note, like a good fellow as you are.' No, no ; I am too old a bird for that. I know what I am about. I ask none but safe men, who perhaps may have a snug little

box down in the country, where I might find it convenient to go in the dog-days. One day last year I came across Fitzackerley, one of your real safe ones, who married Miss Millefleurs Murray-Jones-Jones with a clear thirty thousand.

'Gubbins!' he cried, 'Gubbins! By Jupiter, what a swell you are, man, with your white hat! 'Pon my word, you don't look a day older than you did when we parted at Bombay twelve years ago.'

I always liked Fitzackerley, and there was something in his manner just then that pleased me excessively.

'I may say the same of you,' I returned; 'you are as fresh as an evergreen.' (The fact really was that I thought him wizened, and as yellow as a kite's claw.) 'What do you say to dining with me this evening at the club?'

'All right,' he answered.

I knew it was all right. I guessed he wouldn't say no. At seven o'clock there he was. The dinner was very near perfection. The *pâtes* might have been done a thought more, and the melted butter was a *leettle*, a very *leettle*, too thick; but these were only specks in the sun, and no one but myself would have observed them.

'Well, Fitzackerley,' said I, as we sipped our Burgundy together, 'and so you have a nice little place down in Blankshire, I hear.'

'Well, tolerable. Mrs. Fitzackerley chose it. It is near the principal meet of the Blankshire hounds, and she goes in for sport of all kinds. As for pets and so on, she is fairly mad about them. And let me give you a piece of advice, Gubbins—never marry a woman who has a taste for pets. They are—' And here he finished

his glass, and laid it down on the table with an emphatic rattle.

'No fear of my marrying, Fitz, my boy. It would be hard work to catch me. I have stood proof against legions of widows and spinsters, against blue eyes looking down and black eyes looking up, against arched brows, straight brows, curls and plaits, bashfulness and daring, innocence and impudence, six-feet-two and five-feet-nothing. By Jove, sir, there was a lady going out with me once, and not a bad-looking one either; and you never saw the way she followed me about. But it was all of no use; I was too many for her. I dodged and dodged her till she had to give in, beat a retreat, and retire behind her lines.'

'Well, well, Gubbins, I'll be bound you had a lucky escape; and I must say that I think you have an awfully jolly life up here. You have no one to consult but yourself; you have your papers, your wine, your cigar, and your snug corner in the window. What can you want more?'

'Yes, I think I do get on tolerably well. Town is rather empty just now; that's the only thing.'

It was just the middle of October. This was a hint. I wondered whether he would take it. He did.

'To be sure. What do you say to coming down for a week or so to our place? Hammersley Retreat, they call it. I am certain Mrs. Fitzackerley will be delighted to see you. She is a charming person, of course, and all that sort of thing, but . . . but sometimes a *tête-à-tête* is rather a bore; and, in fact, we shall be very glad indeed if you will break in upon our Darby and Joan life, and spend a week with us.'

I hesitated—it is always well to hesitate in such cases—but Fitzackerley pressed, and so it ended in my agreeing to go down the following Monday. I have rooms in a quiet street close by the club. I packed up my portmanteau and gun-case—for, though I don't shoot much, it looks the right thing to take to a country place—and set off. When I arrived it was about half-past twelve o'clock. I had timed my journey to arrive just before luncheon. I understood that Fitzackerley had a good cook; and a little hot tit-bit in the middle of the day always sets me up. But there was no one at home; master had gone to the neighbouring town, and his good lady herself was out with Mr. Nixon, the master of the hounds, looking after fox-coverts. I sat down, took up the first of a three-volume novel (a thing I hardly ever have the patience to read), pulled through a scene in which Blanche is dragged out of a lake by Frederic, a proceeding very likely to give him a cold in the head; then I yawned two or three times, and wondered what on earth could be keeping Mrs. Fitzackerley so long. I looked about. The room was well furnished enough: on one easy-chair there was a tortoiseshell cat fast asleep; on the opposite sofa there was a monstrous tabby ditto also asleep; sometimes it stretched itself out and then settled again for another snooze. High up there was a cage with a huge gray parrot; it had been scanning me for some time, and it now began to shriek, 'Not at home!—not at home!—not at home to visitors! Go home, and get your dinner.' Hateful bird! I should like to have wrung its neck. A conservatory was in the distance, and I could see other cages hung up. Macaws screamed, love-birds twit-

tered, canaries sang, and a cockatoo burst out now and then with its unmeaning cry. 'Good gracious! fond of pets,' I thought; 'this beats everything I ever saw. If other animals are in proportion, the house must be a small edition of the Zoological Gardens.' One o'clock, half-past one, quarter to two, was struck by the clock on the mantelpiece. One o'clock is always my luncheon-time, and my stomach had warned me that that hour was long past; and still that abominable parrot 'bawled out, 'Not at home!—not at home to visitors! Go home for your dinner!' I wished that its next mouthful of seed would choke it. Presently the clattering of hoofs, and the barking of about two dozen dogs, met my ears; but a quarter of an hour went by, and still no Mrs. Fitzackerley. At last, splashed up to her knees, and with a great dint in her riding-hat, she made her appearance.

'Major Gubbins, to be sure—a hundred apologies; but, the fact is, my little mare Fatima got a strain, and I am looking after it myself. Warm fomentations, Major Gubbins, are what I always recommend; and I think she will do now. Ah, you are looking at my dogs, I see; let me make you known to them. Don't be afraid of poor Bepo; he looks fierce when he shows his teeth in that way, but he is as gentle as a lamb. Here, these are Jeannette and Jeannot,' she continued, dragging two miserable Italian greyhounds in their body-clothes before me; 'and here are dear little Pet and Snarler.' These were pups hideous to behold. 'Those are my three beauties, those beagle hounds; they were given to me by Lady Hunter, and are worth a small fortune. I must not forget Whisker and Hairy, the two Skyes; and there is sweet little

Topsy, the King Charles, in the background. I have had a painting done of her, and it is really quite a *chef-d'œuvre*, she does look so captivating.'

Of course I stammered, and admired, and patted. At last my hostess announced that we must see what luncheon there was, as the dogs must be getting hungry. Dogs, indeed! Surrounded by these yelping curs, we left the room together, I doing my best not to step on her muddy skirts.

CHAPTER II.

HOW HE ENJOYED HIMSELF AT THE FITZACKERLEYS'.

I TOOK my place beside Mrs. Fitzackerley. Something in a covered dish gave out a very appetising odour; it proved to be a haricot, not badly dressed, and, as it was past two o'clock, I fell to with considerable relish. I have had a new set of teeth lately, the springs have not quite settled into their places, and I must eat slowly; besides, I make it a principle never to hurry over meals; so every now and then I looked about, and made pleasant remarks about the scenery, and the advantages of a country life. It is necessary to ingratiate oneself with the hostess. She, however, had bolted her food in about five minutes, and now sat staring at me as I slowly discussed mine. Nothing can be more unpleasant than to be looked at when one is eating; and Mrs. Fitzackerley had very disagreeable piercing gray eyes, but I was determined not to be daunted by them. I had just laid down my knife and fork, and was deliberating whether I might venture on some stewed tomatoes, when she called out in a loud screaming voice,

'O Major Gubbins, I see you have finished. Some more!'

She hardly waited for my answer.

'No; then may I ask you to hand me your plate!—there are some scraps on it that will do nicely for my dogs. I always make their dinners myself, and they are so impatient for them. Haven't you seen Topsy begging for hers this quarter of an hour? I'm sure you won't mind mashing up those potatoes for me—not too much gravy, it isn't good for Topsy. Sweet little pet! she knows what we are doing, doesn't she? and her run has made her quite hungry.'

What could I say? The lady had such a determined way with her, that I felt obliged to give up my plate with several tit-bits on it, that I had fully intended finishing, and had to watch her as she pounded and chopped; but, worse than all, I, Major Gubbins, had to follow her example, and chop away in my turn. I hardly knew myself in this extraordinary position—I, who scarcely ever do anything for anybody—I, who never by any chance put myself out of my own way, or give up anything, why, it seemed incredible! O those detestable heiresses, with their whims and crotchets that every one must give way to!

'Lady Hunter,' said Mrs. Fitzackerley, as she brought her knife down on the plate with a loud click—'Lady Hunter leaves these things to servants, but what is the consequence?—the coats of her dogs are always rough and ragged, they never look smooth and glossy as mine do. Servants never take any pains. One day I came home unexpectedly, and I actually found Marshall giving Pet and Snarler a quantity of rabbit-bones.'

'Dear me!' said I; 'I shouldn't have thought—'

'O yes; but then I have made these things a study. Now, Major Gubbins,' she continued, with a final smooth, 'I think that will do. Might I trouble you to carry that plate? Follow me, if you please. I always feed the dogs out of doors. Come, Fairy, Jeannette, Jeannot, Diamond, Whisker!'

Fancy me, a retired major from

sure you would like to visit the stables, and I do so want to know how Fatima is getting on.'

If there is one thing that I detest more than another, it is a stable. I don't mind mounting a horse when he is brought to the door, and I don't dislike taking a sober ride; but to stand on the cold stones, among hay and straw, to listen to horsey talk, and to do the civil to grooms—all this is



the H.E.I.C.S.—fancy me, a well-known man at the Junior United Service Club—fancy me, I say, dragged from my own luncheon, and condemned to carry a ridiculous plate of dogs' dinner, while the whole assembly barked, whined, and jumped like so many furies!

'Lay it down here, Major Gubbins,' said my hostess. 'Isn't it delightful to see the dear things enjoying themselves? Now I am

hateful. Now I had to stroke the mare's forehead, to feel her fetlocks, and to attend to Mrs. Fitzackerley as she rushed backwards and forwards in her muddy habit, and related all she had done with the Pytchleys and the Cambridgeshires.

'That's a nice bit of horseflesh,' said I, doing my best to look knowing, and pointing to a large gray horse in the corner of the stable.

'It's the worst-bred beast here, and spavined into the bargain,' said the groom; and he and another boy chuckled annoyingly, while Mrs. Fitzackerley joined in with a loud grating laugh.

'Good-bye now till half-past six,' said my companion. 'We dine then, and Mr. Fitzackerley will be home. I hope you will find your room comfortable.'

I did not find it comfortable. I could distinctly hear that abominable parrot, and the yelping of innumerable curs was anything but pleasant. However, I was on a visit, and must expect a few disagreeable things. By the time I had dressed, waxed the ends of my moustache, and touched them up with that invaluable reviver, I felt considerably better. Country air always does me good, and I thought, as I looked in the glass, that I could already notice an improvement, the yellow tinge was certainly less perceptible. I met a pretty housemaid in the passage, and I chuckled her under the chin. I made myself as straight and upright as possible, and went down in good spirits.

'Well, Gubbins, old boy!' cried Fitzackerley, coming to meet me, 'how are you? Delighted to see you! Hope you had a pleasant afternoon. Sorry I couldn't be here to receive you. Business, you know, and all that sort of thing—I believe it is half-past six, but Mrs. Fitzackerley hasn't come down yet. She is late, as indeed she almost always is.'

'Mrs. Fitzackerley must always seem late,' I answered gallantly, 'because we can't help expecting her.'

This was not my own, but I heard her coming, and I thought it would propitiate her. Women dearly love a bit of flattery. However, she took her seat on the sofa between two Italian greyhounds,

and seemed not to think of anything else.

'Henry,' at last she cried, 'what horse do you think your friend Major Gubbins chose to single out for admiration? That wretched gray brute which you were so taken in about the other day. Ha, ha, ha!'

And 'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed Fitzackerley, though not quite so provokingly. Detestable woman! Thirty thousand pounds!—she would have been dear at a hundred thousand.

Dinner was announced. The soup was *à la Julienne*, and tolerably—indeed I may say, very—good.

'Now that Fitzackerley is here,' I said to myself as I finished my plate, 'we shall have some peace; and catch me being made a fool of again.'

I was just beginning a capital story about Masulipatam, and the second course was coming on, when the servant whispered something into Mrs. Fitzackerley's ear. Up she immediately started.

'Henry! Henry!' she cried, 'what do you think? Poor dear Whitefoot has got one of her bad attacks. Marshall says her agonies are frightful. I must go out to her directly; and do send off to Henfield for the "vet." Don't lose a minute about it! I did so want to ride her at the first meet!'

'My dear, my dear, do pray sit down. Can't you wait till after dinner? You forget our friend here. What was that you were saying, Gubbins?'

'Wait till after dinner, indeed!' retorted the lady. 'What can you be thinking of? I shall do nothing of the kind. Major Gubbins must excuse me. Some people can be unfeeling; but I am not one of those who could ever

be insensible to the sufferings of a poor dumb creature.'

So saying, she flounced out of the room.

'It's always the same, Gubbins,' said Fitzackerley, as he drew his chair close to mine. 'If there is nothing the matter with the horses, there is something the matter with the dogs; and if they are all right, the birds are moulting, or the parrot won't talk. By Jove, sir, when Mrs. Fitzackerley was Miss Millefleurs Murray-Jones-Jones, all this kind of thing took me in. I thought, if she was so wonderfully kind to animals, of course she'd be twice as kind to human beings, but I soon found out my mistake. She thinks a precious deal more of Whitefoot's pasterns or Topsy's ears than she does of you—or me.'

'O come, Fitzackerley,' said I, thinking I ought to say something, 'isn't that going rather too far?'

'Not a bit—not a bit. Of course, every one said I was a lucky dog when I got the thirty thousand; but, upon my word, I think I was happier when I was Harry Fitzackerley, with hardly a sou in my pocket, than I am now, with a French cook, and a wife that brings home the brush now and then. Heigho! take some more of that port, Gubbins. I brought it out for you. You may as well take the goods the gods provide you. I will have some Madeira for you to-morrow. Old Murray-Jones-Jones gave it to me on the wedding-day. You won't marry, will you?—I think you said you wouldn't?'

I shook my head emphatically. If anything would be a temptation, Madeira would be; but then—Mrs. Fitzackerley! It ought to be very good and very old to make up for her. I had not forgotten her behaviour at luncheon yet.

'If you please, sir, mistress wants to know if you have sent to Henfield for Mr. Smith yet?'

'Gracious me!' cried Fitzackerley, 'I was forgetting; and what a row I should have got into! Make yourself at home, Gubbins. I will be back directly.'

I am sure it was Mrs. Fitzackerley's fault that the *soufflé* was flat. I heard her vociferating directions about her mare, just as it was coming to table. When we got back to the drawing-room she again appeared, but she kept going backwards and forwards, sometimes leaving the door open, and sometimes slamming it behind her. Then the veterinary surgeon came, and great excitement ensued. Fitzackerley was called out, and I, wishing that I could be transported back to the club, was left alone. When they both returned, I thought I perceived a lull, and I was determined to take advantage of it, and not to be brow-beaten into silence by the late Miss Millefleurs Murray-Jones-Jones.

'I was just going to tell you, Fitzackerley, when we were interrupted—and here I darted a glance at the lady—"about the time when I was at Masulipatam, in '46. The night before a rising was expected, Lord George said to me, "Gubbins, there really is no one whose opinion I have such a respect for as I have for yours; so—"'

'I beg your pardon, Major Gubbins. No doubt your story is very interesting, but I really must tell Mr. Fitzackerley how shamefully James must have been neglecting poor Whitefoot.'

Then followed half an hour's horsey talk. What was I to do? Of course she took the wind out of my sails, and it was quite impossible to go on about Masulipatam after that. I had spent such

a tiresome day that I was quite glad when ten o'clock came, and I went to my room. I glanced towards the bed. A large black mass was just on the very spot where I was about to lie down. I went over, and found, to my horror, that this was nothing else but Mrs. Fitzackerley's great black dog, Beppo, who was rolled round on the white quilt, and who now showed his teeth, and growled savagely. With all the force I possessed I rang the bell, once, twice, three times.

'Marshall—I believe your name is Marshall,' cried I, when the door opened—'turn that brute away; and, Marshall, be sure to give him three or four good kicks on his way out.'

'Lor, sir, we've been a-hunting for him, and wondering where he could ha' got to! But he often comes up to the rooms and makes himself quite comfortable, and at home like.'

'I'd make him at home,' I exclaimed, as I dealt the beast a good kick, and slammed the door with a loud bang. Presently I heard Mrs. Fitzackerley's voice outside:

'Poor Beppo, good fellow! was he hurt? did he get a blow?—Marshall, I have told you always to be most gentle to poor Beppo.' Then followed an answer, and a whisper from the lady of 'Horrid savage—cruel selfish monster!—just what we might expect.'

'No matter, my good dame,' I thought to myself, 'if I choose to stay here, you sha'n't turn me out. I may dislike you and your menagerie, but certainly I will not go away yet. That port-wine at dinner was first-rate, vintage of '48, I think Fitzackerley said; and then the soup—yes, certainly, the cook is fair enough, if she were left to herself.' After a good many suspicious shakes to the clothes, I settled down in my nest,

and had forgotten everything in a most delightful sleep, when I was suddenly roused by a horrible and most unearthly noise—it was like a hoarse screaming laugh. There it was again and again and again. Perhaps burglars were breaking in!—perhaps some lunatic had got loose!—perhaps—But to make a long story short, I jumped up, lighted a candle, and shivering with cold, knocked at Fitzackerley's door.

'Fitzackerley, are you awake?'
No answer.

'Fitzackerley! Fitzackerley! did you hear that dreadful noise? What can it be?'

'What can what be?' came sleepily from under the clothes.

'A horrible noise. I can't tell what it is like. A sort of screech. I think some lunatic must have escaped from Colney Hatch.'

'O, it's only the laughing jackass.'

'The laughing what?'

'The laughing jackass. It is a bird that one of Mrs. Fitzackerley's friends brought her from Australia. It always begins in the night. Never mind—go to sleep. That's the worst of your room; but some people don't seem to mind it.'

'Not mind it!' I repeated to myself. 'Then they must be as deaf as posts.'

Again I lay down, and tried to get some rest, but the beauty of the thing was gone. I tossed and tumbled, and could not close my eyes till about six o'clock, when, just as I was going off, I was awoken by the piping of a host of canaries, while the cockatoo and parrot shouted in chorus. Cross and sleepy, I got up and dressed.

'Good-morning, Major Gubbins!' said my hostess, when I appeared. 'I am sure you will be glad to hear that Whitefoot is much better; she was sound

a sleep when I went in this morning.'

'More than I have been, then. That detestable bird with the ridiculous name kept me awake all the night.'

'Detestable! That is a most valuable and interesting bird. It remains silent all day, and then begins in the night with that very peculiar cry.'

'Very peculiar indeed; and in the morning the smaller fry have their innings.'

'You don't say you heard Ti-tiens and Jenny Jones and Piping Dick? I am so glad they have begun to sing again. Surely, they couldn't have disturbed you! One would have thought you would have quite enjoyed such a concert—real water-bubble notes some of them have.'

'Then I did not enjoy it at all.'

'Major Gubbins, you surprise me! What do you mean?'

'I mean,' answered I, 'out of all patience, that I think they are horrid little wretches, and I should like to wring their necks.'

It so happened that just then I put one of my feet under the table, and it came violently against a cur-dog who was there, and who now began to yelp and howl as if it was being murdered.

'Major Gubbins! Major Gubbins!' screamed Mrs. Fitzackerley, 'do you know what you have done? You have actually kicked one of my Skye puppies, a most valuable creature, worth at least seven guineas. Come here, my precious Dandy, come here, and let me see if you are hurt. And what is this he has got in his mouth? He is always taking up something. Now he has actually got a little paper parcel. What can it be?' She took it up, and, to my intense horror, began to read, 'Perkins's celebrated Hair-Reviver, which is not a Dye. This

valuable preparation restores the faded colour to the hair, makes it luxuriant, and imparts to it a rich glossy brown.' Major Gubbins, may I ask if this belongs to you?'

'Odious woman! She knew it did. I had brought five bottles with me carefully done up in paper. In taking them out of the portmanteau, one must have fallen to the ground, and this that detestable puppy must have seized, and brought down-stairs.

'It is mine, madam,' said I, 'feeling my face getting red; and I will not stay here to be insulted any longer!'

'Insulted! I am sure no one is insulting you.'

'Why, Gubbins, what is all this about?' cried Fitzackerley, as he entered the room just at this critical moment.

'Indeed you may well ask,' answered his wife. 'Major Gubbins comes down, abuses my birds, kicks dear little Dandy, till I am sure he is quite lame—'

'And why shouldn't I kick him, madam? Didn't he go up to my room, and bring down my things?'

'Dandy found Major Gubbins's hair-dye. I beg his pardon, his reviver, which is NOT a dye. That is the principal cause of this exhibition of anger.'

'I am not angry; but I have had no rest since I entered this house.'

'O, come, Gubbins, old fellow,' put in Fitzackerley. 'Never mind; don't be sulky. Stay out the week.'

I hesitated. I thought of the port-wine and the soup. A chair was just behind me, and I was about to sit down, when I felt something uncommonly soft underneath; and Mrs. Fitzackerley screamed, at the top of her voice,

'Major Gubbins! my cat; yes,

my beautiful Persian cat ! You are just sitting down on her. You will kill her. How can you be so thoughtless ?

'Bother the cat'—and you, too ! I should like to have added.

'I am sure, Mr. Fitzackerley,' said the lady angrily, as she stroked her injured favourite—'I am sure, if Major Gubbins has no wish to stay, I wouldn't press him to do so. It is very plain that he has no heart for animals.'

'O my dear, you can't expect every one to be like yourself.'

'Mr. Fitzackerley, I think you forget that I was Miss Millefleurs Murray-Jones-Jones, and that I brought you thirty thousand pounds.'

'I couldn't forget it,' muttered Fitzackerley behind his paper. 'I hear of it about twenty times a day.'

'Therefore, if your friend Major Gubbins wishes to leave, I give him full liberty to do so. And this house, remember, Mr. Fitzackerley, is mine, bought with my money, and not with yours.'

'I can assure you, my good lady, I have not the slightest wish to stay.'

'Don't "good lady" me, sir ; I am not a housekeeper.'

'Good-day, then, madam ; and it will be long before I inflict my presence on you and your favourites.'

I packed up my portmanteau in double-quick time. I met the pretty housemaid on the stairs. She looked very knowing ; and the butler inquired anxiously if I had found all my things. I am sure they were both thinking of the roviver. Fitzackerley followed me to the door.

'It's always the same, old fellow,' he said ; 'but I wish you could have managed to pull on for a little longer. Never mind ; we

shall have a couple of jolly days in town when she is down here ; and we can have one pleasant little dinner at the club.'

One thing I was certain of, that I would never ask him to dinner at the club again. The dogs barked and howled as I drove down the avenue, the parrots screamed, the cockatoo shouted ; and feeling very small—how I hate to feel small!—I disappeared from Hammersley Retreat.

CHAPTER III.

HOW HE GOT ON AT THE C. SHARPS'.

BETWEEN the hours of two and three I found myself in the streets of Henfield, a little country town about four miles from Hammersley. Now I had a strong objection to go back to town just then. First of all I had told all the men at the club that I was to be away at Fitzackerley's for at least a week, or perhaps longer ; and I should look so foolish coming back the next day like a bad shilling. Then I had told my landlady that she might let my rooms for a few days if she liked, and she had answered that very likely she would do so. Besides, when one is all equipped and packed up for a journey it is very disagreeable not to carry out the intention, and get a change of air without much cost or trouble. Had I any acquaintances in the neighbourhood ? I turned this over in my mind, and could not think of one. I went into the solitary confectioner's shop, and sat down to a mutton-chop : it was greasy, raw, and sodden. I was just turning it for the fourth time on my plate, and thinking what sauce could possibly make it eatable, when the door of the outer shop opened, and some one

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came in. From my inner room I could hear all that passed.

'Good-morning, Mrs. Robinson,' said a loud hearty voice. 'How was it that you were not at St. Mary's to-day? We had a splendid service—Thompson in D—and our choir was as good as any there. However, we can't quite live on music. Let me have a plate of your cold beef. I suppose I may go in here.'

As this was said, the door of my room was pushed open, and a tall ruddy-faced man, with a gray beard about a quarter of a yard long, came in. Surely I had heard the voice and seen the face before; but the beard, yes, that certainly was a puzzler. The stranger seated himself opposite, and we mutually stared at one another.

'Gubbins!' at length he exclaimed.

'Sharp! C. Sharp!' I cried in my turn.

We then grasped each other's hands, and began to ask and answer questions as fast as we could get the words out.

'I haven't seen you, Gubbins, these fifteen years. What have you been doing with yourself?'

'And you, Sharp. I doubt if I should ever have known you with that monstrous beard.'

'Ha, ha! so all my friends say; but it keeps the voice all right, and staves off bronchitis. Well, and what on earth brings you down here? I thought you were fast at the United Service.'

I answered shortly that I had been paying a visit in the neighbourhood. I had known Sharp, or, as he was generally called, C. Sharp, when he had been in the 108th N.I. He was a capital good fellow, always willing to rough it, and to make no complaints. He had one hobby—he was always bothering every one

about music; and that was the reason why he was called C. Sharp; but this craze must have been worn away by years. I guessed that all difficulties about where I should go were now at an end. Sharp was always good-natured, and I felt pretty sure that he would ask me over to wherever he happened to be just then. However, it would be much better if he would ask me from himself than if I should put in to be asked. The invitation came all in good time.

'Gubbins!' he cried, when he had despatched his beef, which he did with a great deal of speed and relish, 'can't you make it convenient to run over to my little place for a few days? My daughters—for I have lost my wife'—(I confess that, after my experience of Mrs. Fitzackerley, this did not grieve me much)—'will be delighted to see you, or any of their father's old chums. We can't offer you much. We have no extras, no kickshaws, no French cookery, such as you are accustomed to; just a plain joint every day, and a hearty welcome with it.'

'Nothing could possibly give me greater pleasure,' answered I; and so my portmanteau and gun-case were safely packed into C. Sharp's gig, and seated beside him, I drove out of Henfield.

'You will find my girls,' said C. Sharp, 'pleasant, good-tempered, good-looking country lasses, without any nonsense about them. Emily and Maria are their names. I believe I am going to lose Emily very soon. She is engaged to our Henfield doctor; and I can't say I regret the match very much, for he not only plays the violoncello very fairly, but he has a splendid tenor voice into the bargain. Before he came we never could get up a quartet; now we manage famously. Maria takes the

soprano part, Emily the alto, Alfred Harrison is tenor, and I put in the bass. I haven't gone off so much in my voice as you might think.'

'O, indeed! No, I daresay not.'

'You are fond of music, I think, Gubbins; and I am sure we can give you some that will please you. What does the divine William say?—

"The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is mov'd with concord of sweet
sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils.
Let no such man be trusted."

'O, yes! I like music very well; in fact there is nothing that I enjoy more.'

To tell the truth, this was drawing the long bow. I don't dislike a good tune on a band or a song after dinner, but further than that I think music a perfect nuisance; however, it would not do to let this out to C. Sharp.

The house was built in the cottage style, and situated down in a valley. A damp spot, I should say, and favourable to rheumatism. There was a neat little garden in front, with bowers and arbours dotted about here and there. The hall was hung with a number of horns and Indian curiosities, and there were three or four odd-shaped cases lying about; and I was puzzled to know what they could possibly contain. The girls met us at the door. Emily was short and dark, and had very bright twinkling eyes. Maria was taller, with light hair, and a good colour.

'Girls,' said their father, 'who do you think this is that I have brought with me? No one else but my old chum, Major Gubbins, that you have heard me speak of so often.'

I raised my hat, made my best bow, and said I was charmed to see such blossoms in the wilds of Blankshire. They blushed, and stammered out something about

an unexpected pleasure, and then I saw an appealing look pass from Emily to her father.

'Come, Gubbins,' said he, opening a door on the left, 'you are an old Indian, and I see that you are shivering after your cold drive. Go into my study, and warm yourself by the fire. I will be with you directly.'

I certainly was cold, and the blazing fire was very acceptable. The partitions in that house, however, must have been very thin, for I could catch most of what was passing in the adjoining apartment.

'O papa!' cried Emily, 'what made you bring that Major Gubbins here?'

'And why shouldn't I bring him?'

'O, he is such an epicure! I have often heard you say so, and the servants were busy to-day, and Maria and I dined at one o'clock, and I was going to give you some cold meat, or perhaps a curry at our tea-time.'

'Well, and very good too.'

'That would never do for Major Gubbins. I suppose the only thing to be done is to have two of the fowls killed; and it is such a pity, for they lay so well in the spring, and I wanted to keep them.'

'And what are we to do about dessert?'

'O, never mind dessert. I only asked Gubbins to come and take pot-luck; he must be content with whatever he gets.'

'It's all very well to say that, but I know there never was a greater gourmand than he is. I could have told it by his face. O papa, what shall I do? And Alfred is to be here in the evening, too!'

'Don't be a goose, Emmie; make your mind easy. Nothing is worth fretting about. As for Gubbins, I intend to treat him quite as one of ourselves. I shall make

no difference. We shall do as we always do.'

'Well, I suppose I must only manage as well as I can. Do you think,' she added doubtfully, 'that an apple-pudding would do for second course?'

'To be sure I do. It might be set before the Governor-general himself.'

That was so like poor C. Sharp; he was always pleased with everything you offered him. If he had been given smoked soup or stale fish he would have smacked his lips and said that he had never tasted anything more delicious. Apple-pudding! it was a thing I had not had for years; a vision of horrid doughy-paste came before me, and I shuddered. A tremendous cackling now came from the yard at the back of the house, and then there was a dead stillness. Emily's fowls had evidently been slaughtered. On the whole, she performed her task of catering for us better than might have been expected; the fowls were not so very tough, and even when I washed the apple-pudding down with some execrable claret, I did not make more than one wry face.

'However,' I said to myself, as C. Sharp and I sat over our wine, 'one thing is certain, and that is that this evening I shall be made a regular lion of. Very different from what I was at the Fitzackerleys'; these people are all country folks, burning to hear the latest news from town; and as for this Alfred Harrison, no doubt he will be all curiosity to hear what such a distinguished visitor as Major Gubbins has to say. Now for the stories about Masulipatam, now for Lord George and the Duke of Dunscombe, now for the Rajah of Nagpore and the Begum of Ahmednuggur. When we were all seated round the fire, the girls smart with ribbons and muslins,

I cleared my throat, and began a preparatory haw. I had arranged my first sentence. It was to be:

'When I was going to the Neilgherries a few years ago, I met an uncommonly pretty young widow—'

'Gubbins, will you be kind enough to ring the bell?' asked C. Sharp.

'Certainly.'

Perhaps it was for coffee or liqueurs; my time would certainly come soon. I could afford to wait a minute.

'Mary,' said he, when the servant appeared, 'just bring in two of those cases out of the hall. We may as well begin tuning the instruments before Alfred comes.'

Tuning the instruments! Why, this would be as bad as Mrs. Fitzackerley's menagerie itself; and what would become of my anecdotes?

'O, pray don't mind troubling yourself to-night,' cried I, apparently fearful that all this was for me.

'Not at all, my dear fellow,' exclaimed C. Sharp. 'It's not the least trouble; besides, I assure you, we have music every evening of our lives, haven't we, girls? And here comes Alfred just in time,' said he, as a tall dolorous-looking young man, with spectacles on his nose, and a roll of music under each arm, made his appearance.

How I wished I had said that I hated music! It was plain that instead of admiring *me*, they were determined that I should admire *them*. After some preliminary tuning, which sounded like the screams of dying rats, they rushed at it with a will. The violin squeaked; the violoncello snorted; the two girls rushed down the keys, stopped, rushed down again; the violin ran after them; the violoncello struck in a few despe-

rate gasps, as if he were trying very hard to catch them and couldn't. So it went on and on for full three-quarters of an hour.

'There, Gubbins!' cried C. Sharp, turning round, and mopping his face with a silk handkerchief. 'What do you think of that?'

Of course I could only say that it 'was very fine indeed.'

'Fine! only fine! Splendid! I thought you would admire it; but

of changing my bed, and roughing it as I had done!'

'John Scott Gubbins,' I said to myself, 'for once in your life you have made a grievous mistake.'

'I am sure you must have had enough of it, Major Gubbins,' said Emily at the close, with a penetrating glance; 'and to-morrow evening we must really try and get you some companions.'

'Then there will be talking,'



that's only the Allegro, now we go on to the Andante. Come, girls; come, Alfred; are we all ready?

To it again they went with renewed zest. This time the noise sounded like the caterwauling I have heard sometimes in the night when the cats of the neighbourhood are giving an evening party on the slate. It went on for an indefinite length of time. How selfish they all were! Was it for this, I thought, as I leant back in the arm-chair—was it for this that I had left my club—my comfortable seat, my nice dinners, and my papers? Was it for this that I had gone through the trouble

said C. Sharp, as he laid his violin tenderly into its case.

'We sha'n't hear much of it,' answered Emily, and she retired with her doctor to the farther end of the room, where they kept up a long conversation. Something seemed to amuse them excessively, and I distinctly heard her whisper, 'Wouldn't it be fun to make a match of it?' Though, of course, I could not say positively that this speech had anything to do with me; yet still I acknowledged that I felt some slight curiosity on the subject, and I wondered two or three times who these companions would be.

(To be continued.)

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AUTUMN COLOURING IN CANADA.

BY A CANADIAN.

WHEN Tom Moore visited Canada it was confidently expected that he would write a poem on the Falls of Niagara, but on beholding the mighty cataract the poet declared himself struck dumb. He felt that no words of mortal man—unless his lips, like those of the prophet of old, had been touched with celestial fire—could do justice to such a theme.

In his 'Canadian Boat Song' he has left us a lasting memorial of his visit, but he made no attempt to poetise Niagara.

Poets of far inferior powers have been more presumptuous, and have bestowed on it many superlative epithets and high-sounding phrases; but no true image or adequate description of its wondrous majesty and beauty has ever been given in verse or prose. The painters have not succeeded much better than the poets; it remains, and probably must for ever remain, indescribable by any power of words, and not to be pictured by any painter's skill.

Neither can that other glory of our country, the fall of the year, ever be truly described or depicted. No poetry could convey a conception of the richness and vividness of its colours—the infinite variety of its tints—to those who have not seen them; no painting give the faintest reflection of the radiant intensity of light which throws such a supernal glory over the brilliant robes of kingly October. Painters try it, of course, over and over again; but their best efforts only seem a coarse and lifeless parody on the

etheral splendours of a Canadian fall. Had Turner, with his supreme love of colour and intense desire to transmit the brilliant dyes and effulgence of light in which his soul delighted to his canvas, ever seen the flaming tints of Canadian woods in autumn, he would surely have broken his brush and thrown away his palette in despair. And it is not only the brilliancy of colouring, but the varieties of tint and shade in this most magnificent colour-spectacle, which make it so wonderfully beautiful. A pre-Raphaelite painter might well go mad at the sight of those multitudinous streaks and spots and subtle gradations of hue displayed in every leaf and plant, every little shrub and mighty tree; and all so delicately blended and harmoniously combined, that even on a small scale no human art could ever imitate them.

In early October—when Jack Frost, that greatest of Nature's painters, has done his work deftly and gently, and in a night or two solved all those mysteries of colour-painting which for ages have been the despair of mortal artists—come out with me some afternoon, and let us look upon the wonders he has wrought. Let us go to some narrow gully or ravine, of which one side may be a grassy slope, the other thickly clothed with the trees of the forest, and where a tiny but never failing 'creek' or stream in the bottom keeps the shrubs and plants that grow in profusion round it in full leaf and flower till late in autumn.

Here we will seat ourselves on some mossy stone, or the trunk of a fallen tree, in some 'coign of vantage'; and as you feast your eyes on the picture before you, I will ask you to number the tints and shades of tints so exquisitely wrought into such a glorious symphony of colour, if you can.

In this wonderful picture you may see every shade of red, from the palest pink to a crimson as deep and dark as the heart of a Tuscan rose; every shade of yellow, from brilliant orange to delicate primrose; every shade of green, from the softest apple or pea-green to the dark invisible green of the hemlock pines; every shade of brown, from the deepest bronze to the lightest cinnamon; with lovely tints of lilac, blue, and purple intermixed. Down in the hollow you will see clumps of sumachs with their beautiful red tufts turning to a golden bronze and their graceful leaves freshly dyed a bright crimson or spotted with pink and gold; wreaths of Canadian ivy blazing in scarlet and orange; thickets of blue and purple asters and yellow-golden rod; bunches of vivid red bitter-sweet berries, and trailing wild vines bearing purple bunches of ripening grapes. Then raise your eyes to the rich masses of colour in the woods above. See the great oaks with their magnificent leaves, some a deep crimson, some scarlet, others still green as in summer, and others with fanciful spots and edgings of glowing red on the brilliant green; look at the golden-leaved hickory and butternuts; the delicate honey-coloured leaves of the birch and soft maple; the long pendulous purple leaves of the black ash; and—monarch of all, magnificent king of the forest!—the glorious sugar-maple, in a dazzling array of glowing

orange and flaming scarlet, bright pink and vivid green, before which all other colours seem to fade and grow pale. Perhaps I can even show you a tulip-tree dressed in leaves of such jewel-like and changeful splendour as to baffle all attempts at defining their tints. See, too, in every little cleft and crevice tufts of ferns—green, golden, and bronze; see every stone and fallen tree-trunk covered with mosses and lichens—gray, brown, green, and red; see the myriads of mushrooms and toadstools clustering here and there—pink, yellow, crimson, black, and white; and look at the countless shrubs and tiny plants growing wherever they can find space, all draped in the brilliant hues of the season, and each one showing its own peculiar tint and shade exactly where it seems to harmonise with all the rest and make the picture perfect. Look at the dark pines and hemlocks, their trunks and branches twined with the gaily-coloured leaves and berries of some gaudy creeper. Mark how the white stems of the birch and poplar, and the gray and brown trunks of the other trees, come out here and there to relieve the dazzled eye. Glance up at the lovely blue sky overhead, at the golden sunshine falling everywhere with such soft ethereal radiance; and then say if the most gifted poet could fitly describe the scene, or any painter's art portray it.

Now let us climb the wooded hill, and gaze on the broad expanse of cleared land, spreading away to Lake Erie. Here we catch the blue glitter of the shining water. There is a swamp with its rich colouring of yellow reeds, and pink, crimson, and purple leaves and grasses. On one side are the yellow stubble fields, and the pure fresh green of the

young fall wheat; on the other the brilliant woods with clumps of dark pines and hemlocks intermixed. Let us wait till the sun has gone down, and the rosy after-glow floods earth and sky and water; then you will know something of autumnal colouring in Canada, something of the glories of the season we Canadians poetically designate the 'fall.' English poets in general sing of October as russet, sere, and brown, but in Canada it is the most brilliant of all the months. Like Sardanapalus, the year gathers its richest robes of scarlet, gold, and royal purple to drape its funeral pyre, and dies in a blaze of glory.

About the middle of last October, I travelled westward from Hamilton by the Air Line Railway, part of which is cut through and along the side of a mountain. It was late in the afternoon when the train started, and the setting sun threw its level rays on the beautiful valley lying below, with its pretty farm dwellings, gardens, and orchards, and the many-coloured woods beyond. The cars wound slowly along the edge of the precipice and the hill be-

hind, while the trunks of the great pine-trees caught fire, as it seemed, from the sunset, and threw back the rosy evening light with a deep red burning glow. In the valley beneath every tree flamed as if it had been decked with red rubies or yellow and purple amethysts, like the magic trees in the Arabian tales; every cottage and barn glowed in a halo of light and colour, as if it had been an enchanted palace. The glorious sunset and the lovely valley soon vanished, and the cars travelled on through night and darkness; but this splendid blaze of colour so lately seen still seemed to burn before my eyes. Then I remembered what the young French painter, Henri Regnault, whose genius was so early snatched away from the world, said, when describing his feelings after first seeing the Alhambra with its rich colours steeped in the splendours of Spanish sunlight: 'For days,' he wrote, 'I could do no work. I saw nothing but fire.' For that night, at least, I, like Henri Regnault, saw nothing but fire.



A ROCK-PHENOMENON.

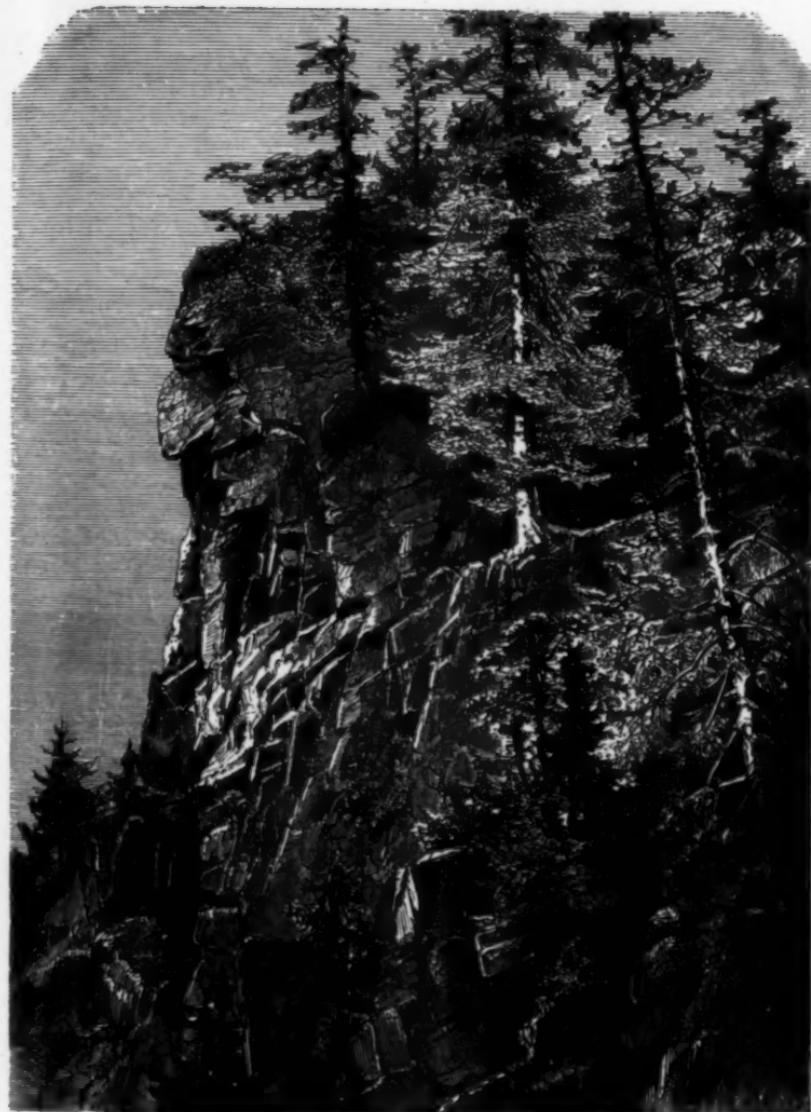
ONE of the most charming valleys in the Thuringian Forest is the Dietharz, or Schmalwasser Dale, in the north-west portion of the mountain range that lies in the Duchy of Coburg Gotha. The sweetest valleys, embellished with picturesque groups of rocks, and traversed by sparkling brooks, extend fan-shaped from the hollow in which lie the two ancient villages Tampach and Dietharz. The lovely Schmalwassergrund rises from Tampach up to the Falkenstein. It possesses that character of sweetly poetical melancholy that appeals most to those hearts that are forced to go through the world misunderstood, despised, and scorned. It is such natures that know the value of a hilly tract like this; for neither here nor far around in the mountains is a human dwelling to be found.

In this valley, where the Schmalwassergrund is entered from Dietharz, at about ten minutes' distance from the village hard by the excellent carriage road which leads up to the Falkenstein and to the idyllic Oberhof, there stands a curiously shaped rock. Rising to a height of twenty or thirty metres,

it juts forward from the plain, and assumes the form of a human face which, seen in profile, bears a surprising resemblance to his late Majesty Napoleon III., Emperor of France.

It is strange that Nature, by fortuitous circumstances, should have been able to create so grotesque a figure. Napoleon III.'s countenance is rendered so strikingly that, though it is more of a caricature than a flattering likeness, it is difficult for the observer to resist doubting for a moment whether such a phenomenon could really be caused by the elements alone. It is more than a mere silhouette profile which rises before us in these colossal dimensions. The eye with the half-closed lids, the upturned moustache—in fact, all those traits which mark the expression of resignation and energy which we were accustomed to consider the chief characteristics of Napoleon III. are imprinted on this stone portrait.

Our illustration represents this rock, to which the people had already given the name of Napoleon stone; it is best seen from the second pier of the second bridge.



A ROCK PHENOMENON.

See page 456.

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MARIE LEGAULT AND THE GYMNASE.

BEFORE speaking of Marie Legault, a few words about the history and vicissitudes of the great theatre, the fallen fortunes of which she appears destined to raise, may not be out of place. The Gymnase Theatre (founded by a company of shareholders, who placed the management of the theatre in the hands of a M. Poirson) first opened its doors to the public on the night of the 23d December 1820 with a prologue, *Le Boulevard Bonne Nouvelle*, written by Eugène Scribe, Melesville, and Moreau; an opera, *La Visite à la Compagne*, by Guenée; and a vaudeville, *La Maison en Loterie*, by Picard and Alexander Piccini. In 1820 the opening of a new theatre in Paris was an event of the greatest importance, and at first no one would believe the news; but when at length doubt was no longer possible all the rival theatres formed a league to petition the Government to withdraw the privilege it had granted. So energetic were their protestations that M. de Corbières, Minister of the Interior, on the one hand, unable to withdraw without sufficient pretext the privilege he had already granted, and on the other unwilling to bring ruin—as it was represented to him—upon the theatres already flourishing, ordained that the new playhouse was only authorised, as its title showed, to bring out fragments of plays afterwards to be represented at the royal theatres, and occasionally, by special indulgence, new vaudevilles. Thus, an act of *Tartuffe*, a scene out of

Richard Cœur de Lion or *Caravan of Cairo* might be given, but not the entire work. It is unnecessary to say that such an interdict was equivalent to condemning the new theatre to hopeless ruin. But although the directors saw this clearly enough, in a spirit of wise diplomacy they cheerfully accepted the new stipulation, judging that the most important step was to insure the opening of the theatre, and hoping that success and good management would in time induce the Government to revoke so senseless an edict.

The opening night was one fraught with much anxiety. The prologue went off well, and although the opera of Guenée was received with signs of dissatisfaction by an audience, the majority of which was composed of inimical partisans, the admirable acting of Perlet in the *Maison en Loterie* won the applause of all, and stamped the new undertaking as brilliantly successful. Zealous opposition was compelled to bow its head before the verdict of the public, and for three years the new theatre was the scene of a series of triumphs. Towards the end of 1822, the *Comédiens d'Etampes*, by Sewrin and Moreau, was produced, and the wonderful success which attended it—it was performed over 134 consecutive nights—not a little owing to the following amusing incident: The play, written expressly for Perlet, was but a series of travesties, and the great gem of the burlesque was an English song

which that actor had brought with him from London. At the very last moment, owing to some silly quarrel, the particulars of which it would be idle to give, Perlet declared that this song, being his property and not that of the authors, he declined to sing ; and notwithstanding the prayers of the manager and authors, he remained fixed in his determination and deaf to all entreaties. As the play was to be produced on the following night there was nothing to be done but to make the best of the difficulty, and leave out the song of which such great things had been expected. The first night everything went on well until the moment came when the song should have been sung. Then Perlet paused ; the other actors followed his example, and some of the audience, privy to the scandal, began calling out, 'The song ! The song !' Seeing the public thus excited, the leader of the orchestra began the prelude. Perlet, wild with fury, hesitated an instant, then left the stage, rushed to his dressing-room, and began tearing off his dress. The enraged public began bawling out, 'An apology ! An apology !' and notwithstanding the intervention of the police the tumult grew louder every minute. At length Perlet returned, endeavoured to offer some explanation, but was interrupted by loud cries of 'An apology ! An apology !' and retired again, exclaiming that he would not apologise. The other actors now all left the stage, and the tumult in the house reached almost a delirious pitch. So terrible was the storm that, after some minutes, Perlet again reappeared, this time half undressed, and after having declared that from that moment he renounced the stage, retired, fol-

lowed by prolonged hisses, and the curtain fell. But the public would not be quiet ; and so, after a quarter of an hour, a *commissaire de police* appeared upon the stage, and announced that, as M. Perlet persisted in his determination to abandon the stage for ever, he belonged no longer to that theatre, but that nevertheless, out of respect for the public, he had offered to act in *Le Parrain*, which was advertised as terminating the performance. At this announcement the public calmed down as if by magic, and Perlet, reappearing without any opposition, brought the evening to a triumphant close amid rapturous applause. It was not, however, all over yet. Immediately after the curtain had fallen Perlet demanded satisfaction of M. Moreau, one of the authors of the play, for certain offensive epithets that gentleman had applied to him in the heat of the brawl. The following morning the combatants met at the Porte Maillot. The seconds proposed swords ; but Perlet, claiming the choice of weapons, chose pistols, and three times were these engines of death loaded and discharged, but to no purpose. It seemed impossible to hit any one or anything that morning. At length honour was declared satisfied; Perlet consented to sing the famous song, and the bloody fray ended in a breakfast at Gillet's. The miraculous escape of both combatants in this encounter is now no longer a mystery, for we have it from the mouth of one of the seconds that, although the principals were ignorant of the fact, the pistols were not loaded with bullets. The scandal caused by this incident, however, rendered the play famous, and such crowds flocked to see it that the old jealous ani-

mosity of the other managers broke out afresh ; petitions were addressed anew to the Minister of the Interior, who at length issued an injunction warning the directors of the Gymnase that if they did not conform, within a space of eight days, to the obnoxious clause which forbade them to produce any play at their theatre in its entirety, the house would be closed by order of the Government. What was to be done ? The sum of money netted nightly was enormous, and it seemed hard indeed to be forced to interrupt so lucrative a performance. At length a way was found out of the difficulty : a deputation was sent to the Duchesse de Berry, the patronage of her royal highness was solicited and obtained, the house became the Théâtre de Madame, and the artists, actors in ordinary to her royal highness, a medallion of the Princess being placed on the wall in the lobby surrounded by the following quotation from Virgil, ' *Heec otia fecit.*' Screened from jealous animosity by protection from so high a quarter, the Théâtre de Madame became the rendezvous of fashionable Paris, the public only being admitted in full dress, and as Scribe, who was at that time in the full flush of his fame and genius, gave some of the best works of his pen to the fashionable playhouse, it is needless to say triumph but succeeded triumph. The following amusing anecdote is told of Madame la Duchesse and her troop. The Princess made up her mind that the famous scene in the farce *Le Sourd, ou l'Auberge pleine*, in which Dasmières and papa Doliban play a game of picquet and crack jokes of most questionable propriety, should be witnessed by the King and the prudish

Duchesse d'Angoulême. This plan was far from being easy of execution. The King only went to the theatre on the most solemn occasions ; it would be obviously useless and absurd to try and entice him to the Gymnase, and as for giving a soirée dramatique at the Pavillon Marsan for the representation of so broad a farce, it appeared at first impossible. The wily Princess, however, overcame all these obstacles. One day she invited the King and royal family to dine, without in any way letting them suspect what surprise was awaiting them. After dinner, when passing through the state apartments, what was their astonishment to find two common fellows calmly seated in one of the saloons playing picquet ; and, according to the strict orders of the Duchesse, paying no sort of attention to their august presence. ' Do not disturb yourselves, gentlemen,' said the Duchess ; and chairs being provided for the royal family around the table, the famous scene began. One of the actors, Dormeuil, had tacked on the following absurd and terrible pun in a spirit of courtly flattery :

Dasmières. See here, papa Doliban, you who know everything, can you tell me who is the younger brother of Telemachus ?

Doliban. I never heard that Telemachus had any brothers.

Dasmières. Yes, he had, papa Doliban. Think again.

Doliban. It is useless. I give it up.

Dasmières. Well, then, the younger brother of Telemachus is his Royal Highness the Duc de Bordeaux.

Doliban. What do you say ?

Dasmières. It is true ; you are

not so clever as you think, papa Doliban.

Doliban. Well, but why is his Royal Highness—

Darnières. Because he is the dernier rejeton d'Ulysse (*du Lys*)!

It is curious to remark that this hideous *calembour* was perpetrated in the presence of the young prince in question, the Duc de Bordeaux, now Count de Chambord. In 1824 the production of *La Quarantaine*, *Le plus beau Jour de la Vie*, *Le Charlatanisme*, and *Les Premiers Amours* brought the receipts of that year up to the immense sum of 28,800*l.*; but notwithstanding these brilliant results, the shareholders of the company not only never enjoyed any dividend, but found themselves more and more in debt to the directors, who alone appeared to be profiting by the successes. The matter was looked into, and the key to the enigma soon found. The directors (with M. Poirson at their head), with a view to the increasing of the gross nightly profits, a percentage on which formed the source of their income, and quite careless as to whether the shareholders ever heard of a dividend or not, had been using every means in their power to obtain the best histrionic talent in France, and had been incurring immense expenses, for which the shareholders were alone responsible. Thus they had not hesitated to engage Leontine Fay (then but ten years of age) at a salary of 20*l.* a night, and were paying Perlet 12*l.* nightly, Gontier 10*l.*, and the rest in proportion. Thus half the nightly profits went in the paying of the actors, and the other half into the pockets of the directors. After some discussion, M. Poirson, the head director, succeeded in appeasing the angry

shareholders, and an arrangement was come to by which the profits were more equally divided. The Revolution of July resulting in the flight of the royal patroness, the Théâtre de Madame resumed its old title of the Théâtre du Gymnase Dramatique, and cleverly catering to the changed tastes of the public, continued to net enormous sums nightly by the production of such plays as *Les vieux Péchés*, *Michel Perrin*, *Pauline*, *Le Gamin de Paris*, &c. In 1842 M. Poirson quarrelled with the Society of Dramatic Authors, and in disgust offered to sell the theatre to any one who would give him 225,000 francs cash. M. Lemoine Montigny, then director of the Gaieté, accepted the offer; the old company of shareholders was dissolved, and M. Montigny became sole director of the Gymnase, a position he holds at the present day. The brilliant series of successes which distinguished his management up to the other day is known to all. Every one remembers how, when his first troop, which was composed of Bressant, Geffroy, Lafontaine, Leseur, Villars, Priston, Landrol, Dupuis, Mélanie, Rose Chéri (the original Suzanne d'Ange in the *Demi Monde* of the younger Dumas), Figeac, and Anna Chéri, was thinned by 'marriage and death and division,' he succeeded in inducing such artists as Victoria Lafontaine, Lafont, Delaporte, and Pasca to enrol themselves under his banner. The most brilliant period of all, however, was the one in which Desclée interpreted the *chef-d'œuvre* of the younger Dumas, and there can be but little doubt that the fortune of M. Montigny, which is estimated at two millions of francs, is chiefly due to the wonderful

genius of that great actress. No one who saw Mdlle. Desclée in the *Demi Monde*, in the *Princesse Georges*, in *Diane de Lys*, in *Une Visite de Noces*, or in the *Femme de Claude* can ever forget such wonderful displays of the rarest histrionic genius. At the death of Desclée the wonderful good fortune of the Gymnase seemed to desert it, and the director, having amassed considerable wealth, appeared not unwilling to let his remaining stars complete by desertion the dismemberment of his troop which the death of Desclée had begun. From having been the most popular theatre in the French capital, the Gymnase fell to be the one most generally avoided by such as care to find good plays well interpreted; and until the *début* of Mdlle. Legault, and more especially up to the production the other night of *Andrette*, no theatre in Paris could offer less attraction. Entered at a very early age at the Conservatoire, Mdlle. Legault excited the greatest enthusiasm at the *concours* of 1872 by her wonderful acting in the *Epreuve Nouvelle* of Marivaux. The critics asserted that, although Mdlles. Mars, Anais, Aubert, and Emilie Dubois were undisputedly great actresses, Mdlle. Legault was their equal, while Mdlle. Reichemberg and Mdlle. Baretta could not approach her. Although she was only fourteen years of age, the Odéon, the Vaudeville, and the Gymnase made her the most brilliant offers, which she had the good sense to refuse, being assured by the best judges that if she would remain but one year longer at the Conservatoire she would easily gain the first prize which would enable her to make her *début* at the Français. Moreover, such was the high opinion formed

of her talents by the public that the society of the Comédie Française offered to treat her as a *pensionnaire*, and agreed to pay her, during the extra year she should pass at the Conservatoire, a fixed salary, in return for which they would require nothing but her attendance as a spectator at the great national theatre on such occasions as Bressant and Reichemberg should perform. This arrangement was accepted, and a year rolled by. In 1873, Mdlle. Legault obtained the first prize at the Conservatoire in the part of Agnes in the *Ecole des Femmes*. Although by so doing she had fulfilled their highest expectations, the capricious members of the committee of the Comédie Française now changed their minds and began to find fault with a talent which, when but half developed, they had pronounced perfect. At this juncture, and while debating how they could get out of their engagement with Mdlle. Legault and put Baretta in her place, M. Montigny came forward with the most brilliant offer, which was accepted; and Mdlle. Legault made her *début* at the Gymnase in the same play in which she had first attracted public attention—in the *Epreuve Nouvelle* of Marivaux—which was specially revived as being a play in which the peculiar gifts of the young actress might be displayed to the best advantage. Her success in this rôle, although great, was quite eclipsed by the immense triumph she achieved as Lucienne in *Les Idées de Mme. Aubray*. Her acting in that part was indeed marvellous, and from that day her position as one of the best actresses of France was no longer a subject of dispute. Under the magic influence of her genius, the good fortune of the

Gymnase revived, the house began to be thronged as in the old days when Desclée played in *Frou-Frou*, or Delaporte in *Nos bons Villageois*. All Paris was attracted by the sweet smiles of the young *débutante*; and her wonderful acting in the *Ecole des Femmes*, some months later, showed the success she had so honestly earned in the beginning of her youthful career was to be increased by reason of the sustained and progressive efforts of her genius. She acted in a little one-act comedy, written in 1851 by the younger Dumas for Delaunay and Favart to act in at the Hôtel Castellane, *Le Bijou de la Reine*, in *Brulons Voltaire*, in *Une Femme qui ment*, in *Dubois d'Australie*, in *La Dragonne*, by Plouvier, in *La Joie de la Maison*, in *Séraphine*, in *Les Deux Comtesses*, in *Les Maniaques*, and in *La Dernière Poupée*, by De Najac. Her greatest success, however, is her latest, in the little one-act comedy by Alfred de Courcy entitled *Andrette*, and produced but a few weeks ago at the Gymnase. The plot of this exquisite little play is one of those simple ones in which Frenchmen know so well how to weave all the bright threads of their art. A young marquise (Mdlle. Legault), a perfect type of the frivolous but tender-hearted young Frenchwoman, decides to remain to dinner with her mother, and lest her husband should be alarmed by her absence acquaints him with the fact in a hurriedly-written note, which her cousin, who happens to be present, puts into an envelope and directs. The dinner being over early, the young marquise returns home on foot, and finds her husband has not yet come back from his club. On the salver she discovers a letter ad-

dressed to her husband and scented with violet. This letter, evidently from a woman, annoys the young wife; and not even the visit of a friend can dissipate the little clouds of jealousy caused by this most compromising-looking envelope. A certain Count Balbiani (admirably acted by St. Germain) is announced. He is what the French call *un homme à bonnes fortunes*, and boasts openly of his intrigues with the fair sex. He is going to finish the evening at the house of the celebrated Zigzag, and carelessly pulls from his pocket the invitation with which that fair enchantress has honoured him. To the horror and astonishment of the young marquise the handwriting and the perfume of the letter are the same as those which have been poisoning her mind for the past half hour. The first thing is to get rid of Balbiani; this she succeeds in doing without much difficulty, and then begins the scene of the temptation, which is wonderfully acted by Mdlle. Legault. She dare not open the letter, and yet she longs to know the contents. She endeavours to entrap her maid into tearing the detested envelope, but this Machiavellian scheme fails utterly. She is in despair. At length her husband arrives quite innocently, and is greatly surprised at his wife's favouring him with what in conjugal language is known as a scene. He cannot explain the cause of the disturbance. At length she hands him the letter, but forbids him to open it. He puts it quietly in his pocket. 'What!' she exclaims; 'you are not going to read it?' 'Have you not forbidden me to do so?' replies the husband, smiling. This is more than female flesh and blood can stand, and the marquise, burning with shame and anger,

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threatens a separation. To calm the storm her husband at length offers her the letter, remarking pointedly, 'Nobody forbids you to read it.' She opens and reads it: it is her letter, her own letter, the one she wrote from her mother's house. Overcome with shame and confusion she bows her head, and nothing but the fond and forgiving kisses of her husband can stop her blushes and bring back her smiles. Such is the plot; but the action of the piece is a masterpiece of clever workmanship, and the acting of

the talented actress whose portrait we give simply perfect. The peculiar genius of Mdlle. Legault is the more valuable as just now there is a great scarcity of *ingénues*, the talent of Mdlle. Delaporte being rather an affair of the past, and Baretta and Reichemberg being absorbed by the all-devouring *Comédie Française*. Let us hope that the same talented author who wrote *Andrette* will ere long give Mdlle. Legault another opportunity of displaying her delicious talent in his cleverly contrived situations.



SUNNY NATURE.

I.

STALWART and sturdy as the pine that braves the Northern blast,
With heart of gold, though black of skin, *he* never prates of 'caste';
Faithful and dogged, ever true to 'sahib,' on plods he,
From morn till night he works and slaves, nor wishes to be free.

II.

And then he strikes his tambourine at eve when toil is done,
His teeth display'd, his polish'd face alive with honest fun;
The while, with listening ears up prick'd, his donkey by him stands,
The merry jingle drinking in. And now the active hands

III.

Still fast and faster beat until all-deafening is the din,
Whilst joins his voice to it the ass; and darkey's face, a-grin,
Beams like the moonbeam's silver light upon the midnight sea—
A merry soul at work or play, a merry soul is *he*.

IV.

To slave and slave, and still to slave, is his profound delight,
And take it out in honest noise and joyous din at night;
To work and work, and *still* to work, a toiling human bee;
And if this be to *be* a slave, what slave of *us* is free?



SUNNY NATURE.

See page 465.

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SUNNY NATURE.

See page 465.

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VOR

MICHAEL STROGOFF, OR THE RUSSIAN COURIER.

BY JULES VERNE.

PART II.

CHAPTER III.

BLOW FOR BLOW.

SUCH were now the relative situations of Marfa Strogoff and Nadia. All was understood by the old Siberian, and though the young girl was ignorant that her much-regretted companion still lived, she at least knew his relationship to her whom she had made her mother; and she thanked God for having given her the joy of taking the place of the son whom the prisoner had lost.

But what neither of them could know was that Michael, having been captured at Kolyvan, was in the same convoy and was on his way to Tomsk with them.

The prisoners brought by Ivan Ogareff had been added to those already kept by the Emir in the Tartar camp. These unfortunate people, consisting of Russians, Siberians, soldiers and civilians, numbered some thousands, and formed a column which extended over several versts. Some among them being considered dangerous were handcuffed and fastened to a long chain. There were, too, women and children, many of the latter suspended to the pommels of the saddles, while the former were dragged mercilessly along the road on foot, or driven forward as if they were animals. The horsemen escorting the prisoners compelled them to maintain a certain order, and there were no laggards with the exception of those who fell never to rise again.

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In consequence of this arrangement, Michael Strogoff, marching in the first ranks of those who had left the Tartar camp—that is to say, among the Kolyvan prisoners—was unable to mingle with the prisoners who had arrived after him from Omsk. He had therefore no suspicion that his mother and Nadia were present in the convoy, nor did they suppose that he was among those in front.

This journey from the camp to Tomsk, performed under the lashes and spear-points of the soldiers, proved fatal to many, and terrible to all. The prisoners travelled across the steppe, over a road made still more dusty by the passage of the Emir and his vanguard.

Orders had been given to march rapidly. The short halts were rare. The hundred and fifty versts under a burning sky seemed interminable, though they were performed as rapidly as possible.

The country, which extends from the right of the Obi to the base of the spur, detached from the Sayanok mountains, is very sterile. Only a few stunted and burnt-up shrubs here and there break the monotony of the immense plain. There was no cultivation, for there was no water; and it was water that the prisoners, parched by their painful march, most needed. To find a stream they must have diverged fifty versts eastward, to the very foot of the spur which divides the

waters between the basins of the Obi and Genisei.

There flows the Tom, a little affluent of the Obi, which passes near Tomsk before losing itself in one of the great northern arteries. There water would have been abundant, the steppe less arid, the heat less severe. But the strictest orders had been given to the commanders of the convoy to reach Tomsk by the shortest way, for the Emir was much afraid of being taken in the flank and cut off by some Russian column descending from the northern provinces. Now the Siberian high-road did not lie along the banks of the Tom, at least in the part between Kolyvan and a little village called Zabediero, and it was necessary to follow the high-road.

It is useless to dwell upon the sufferings of the unhappy prisoners. Many hundreds fell on the steppe, where their bodies would lie until winter, when the wolves would devour the remnants of their bones.

As Nadia helped the old Siberian, so in the same way did Michael render to his more feeble companions in misfortune such services as his situation allowed. He encouraged some, supported others, going to and fro, until a prick from a soldier's lance obliged him to resume the place which had been assigned him in the ranks.

Why did he not endeavour to escape?

The reason was that he had now quite determined not to venture until the steppe was safe for him. He was resolved in his idea of going as far as Tomsk 'at the Emir's expense,' and indeed he was right. As he observed the numerous detachments which scoured the plain on the convoy's flanks, now to the south, now to

the north, it was evident that before he could have gone two versts he must have been recaptured. The Tartar horsemen swarmed—it actually appeared as if they sprang from the earth—like insects which a thunder-storm brings to the surface of the ground. Flight under these conditions would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible. The soldiers of the escort displayed excessive vigilance, for they would have paid for the slightest carelessness with their heads.

At nightfall of the 15th of August, the convoy reached the little village of Zabediero, thirty versts from Tomsk. Here the road joins the Tom.

The prisoners' first movement would have been to rush into the river, but they were not allowed to break the ranks until the halt had been organised. Although the current of the Tom was just now like a torrent, it might have favoured the flight of some bold or desperate man, and the strictest measures of vigilance were taken. Boats, requisitioned at Zabediero, were brought up to the Tom and formed a line of obstacles impossible to pass. As to the encampment on the outskirts of the village, it was guarded by a cordon of sentinels.

Michael Strogoff, who now naturally thought of escape, saw, after carefully surveying the situation, that under these conditions it was perfectly impossible; so, not wishing to compromise himself, he waited.

The prisoners were to encamp for the whole night on the banks of the Tom, for the Emir had put off the entrance of his troops into Tomsk. It had been decided that a military fête should mark the inauguration of the Tartar headquarters in this important city. Feofar-Khan already occupied the

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fortress, but the bulk of his army bivouacked under its walls, waiting until the time came for them to make a solemn entry.

Ivan Ogareff left the Emir at Tomak, where both had arrived the evening before, and returned to the camp at Zabediero. From here he was to start the next day with the rear-guard of the Tartar army. A house had been arranged for him in which to pass the night. At sunrise horse- and foot-soldiers were to proceed to Tomak, where the Emir wished to receive them with the pomp usual to Asiatic sovereigns. As soon as the halt was organised, the prisoners, worn out with their three days' journey, and suffering from burning thirst, could drink and take a little rest. The sun had already set, when Nadia, supporting Marfa Strogoff, reached the banks of the Tom. They had not till then been able to get through those who crowded the banks, but at last they came to drink in their turn.

The old woman bent over the clear stream, and Nadia, plunging in her hand, carried it to Marfa's lips. Then she refreshed herself. They found new life in these welcome waters.

Suddenly Nadia started up; an involuntary cry escaped her.

Michael Strogoff was there, a few steps from her. It was he. The dying rays of the sun fell upon him.

At Nadia's cry Michael started. But he had sufficient command over himself not to utter a word by which he might have been compromised. And yet, when he saw Nadia, he also recognised his mother.

Feeling he could not long keep master of himself at this unexpected meeting, he covered his eyes with his hands and walked quickly away.

Nadia's impulse was to run

after him, but the old Siberian murmured in her ear,

'Stay, my daughter!'

'It is he?' replied Nadia, choking with emotion. 'He lives, mother! It is he!'

'It is my son,' answered Marfa, 'it is Michael Strogoff, and you see that I do not make a step towards him! Imitate me, my daughter.'

Michael had just experienced the most violent emotion which a man can feel. His mother and Nadia were there. The two prisoners who were always together in his heart, God had brought them together in this common misfortune. Did Nadia know who he was? Yes, for he had seen Marfa's gesture, holding her back as she was about to rush towards him. Marfa, then, had understood all, and kept his secret.

During that night, Michael was twenty times on the point of looking for and joining his mother; but he knew that he must resist the longing he felt to take her in his arms, and once more press the hand of his young companion. The least imprudence might be fatal. He had besides sworn not to see his mother—he would not see her voluntarily. Once at Tomsk, since he could not escape this very night, he would set off across the steppe without having even embraced the two beings in whom all the happiness of his life was centred, and whom he should leave exposed to so many perils.

Michael hoped that this fresh meeting at the Zabediero camp would have no disastrous consequences either to his mother or to himself. But he did not know that part of this scene, although it passed so rapidly, had been observed by Sangarre, Ogareff's spy.

The Tsigane was there, a few

paces off, on the bank, as usual, watching the old Siberian woman, without being in the least suspected by her. She had not caught sight of Michael, for he

Marfa Strogoff's son, the Czar's courier, was at this moment in Zabediero, among Ivan Ogareff's prisoners.

Sangarre did not know him,



disappeared before she had time to look round; but the mother's gesture as she kept back Nadia had not escaped her, and the look in Marfa's eyes told her all.

It was now beyond doubt that

but she knew that he was there. She did not then attempt to discover him, for it would have been impossible in the dark and the immense crowd.

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and Marfa Strogoff, that was equally useless. It was evident that the two women would keep on their guard, and it would be impossible to overhear anything of a nature to compromise the courier of the Czar. The Tsigane's first thought was to tell Ivan Ogareff. She therefore immediately left the encampment.

A quarter of an hour after, she reached Zabediero, and was shown into the house occupied by the Emir's lieutenant.

Ogareff received the Tsigane directly.

'What have you to tell me, Sangarre?' he asked.

'Marfa Strogoff's son is in the encampment,' answered Sangarre.

'A prisoner?'

'A prisoner.'

'Ah!' exclaimed Ogareff, 'I shall know—'

'You will know nothing, Ivan,' replied the Tsigane; 'for you do not even know him by sight.'

'But you know him; you have seen him, Sangarre!'

'I have not seen him; but his mother betrayed herself by a gesture, which told me everything.'

'Are you not mistaken?'

'I am not mistaken.'

'You know the importance which I attach to the apprehension of this courier,' said Ivan Ogareff. 'If the letter which he has brought from Moscow reaches Irkutak, if it is given to the Grand Duke, the Grand Duke will be on his guard, and I shall not be able to get at him. I must have that letter at any price. Now you come to tell me that the bearer of this letter is in my power. I repeat, Sangarre, are you not mistaken?'

Ogareff spoke with great animation. His emotion showed the extreme importance he attached to the possession of this letter. Sangarre was not at all put out

by the urgency with which Ogareff repeated his question.

'I am not mistaken, Ivan,' she said.

'But, Sangarre, there are thousands of prisoners in the camp; and you say that you do not know Michael Strogoff.'

'No,' answered the Tsigane, with a look of savage joy, 'I do not know him; but his mother knows him. Ivan, we must make his mother speak.'

'To-morrow she shall speak!' cried Ogareff. So saying, he extended his hand to the Tsigane, who kissed it; for there is nothing servile in this act of respect, it being usual among the Northern races.

Sangarre returned to the camp. She found out Nadia and Marfa Strogoff, and passed the night in watching them. Although worn out with fatigue, the old woman and the girl did not sleep. Their great anxiety kept them awake. Michael was living, but a prisoner as they were. Did Ogareff know him, or if he did not, would he not soon find him out? Nadia was occupied by the one thought that he whom she had thought dead still lived. But Marfa saw further into the future; and although she did not care what became of herself, she had every reason to fear for her son.

Sangarre, under cover of the night, had crept near the two women, and remained there several hours listening. She heard nothing. From an instinctive feeling of prudence not a word was exchanged between Nadia and Marfa Strogoff. The next day, the 16th of August, about ten in the morning, trumpet-calls resounded throughout the encampment. The Tartar soldiers were almost immediately under arms.

Ivan Ogareff, having left Zabediero, arrived, surrounded by a

large staff of Tartar officers. His face was more clouded than usual, and his knitted brows gave signs of latent wrath which was waiting only for an occasion to break forth.

Michael Strogoff, hidden in a group of prisoners, saw this man pass. He had a presentiment that some catastrophe was imminent; for Ivan Ogareff knew now that Marfa was the mother of Michael Strogoff, captain in the corps of the Czar's couriers.

Ivan Ogareff, having reached the centre of the camp, dismounted, and his escort cleared a large circle round him.

Just then Sangarre approached him, and said,

'I have no news for you, Ivan.'

Ivan Ogareff's only reply was to give an order to one of his officers.

Then the ranks of prisoners were brutally hurried up by the soldiers. The unfortunate people, driven on with whips, or pushed on with the butt-ends of the lances, kept rising again in haste, and arranged themselves round the camp. A strong guard of soldiers, both foot and horse, drawn up behind, rendered escape impossible.

Silence then ensued, and, on a sign from Ivan Ogareff, Sangarre advanced towards the group, in the midst of which stood Marfa.

The old Siberian saw her coming. She knew what was going to happen. A scornful smile passed over her face. Then leaning towards Nadia, she said in a low tone,

'You know me no longer, my daughter. Whatever may happen, and however hard this trial may be, not a word; not a sign. It concerns him, and not me.'

At that moment Sangarre, having regarded her for an instant, put her hand on her shoulder.

'What do you want with me?' said Marfa.

'Come!' replied Sangarre.

And, pushing the old Siberian before her, she took her before Ivan Ogareff, in the middle of the cleared ground.

Michael cast down his eyes, that their angry flashings might not appear.

Marfa, standing before Ivan Ogareff, drew herself up, crossed her arms on her breast, and waited.

'You are Marfa Strogoff?' asked Ogareff.

'Yes,' replied the old Siberian calmly.

'Do you retract what you said to me when, three days ago, I interrogated you at Omsk?'

'No!'

'Then you do not know that your son, Michael Strogoff, courier of the Czar, has passed through Omsk?'

'I do not know it.'

'And the man in whom you thought you recognised your son was not he, was not your son?'

'He was not my son.'

'And since then you have not seen him amongst the prisoners?'

'No.'

'And if he were pointed out, would you recognise him?'

'No.'

On this reply, which showed a determined resolution to acknowledge nothing, a murmur was heard amongst the crowd.

Ogareff could not restrain a threatening gesture.

'Listen,' said he to Marfa, 'your son is here, and you shall immediately point him out to me.'

'No.'

'All these men, taken at Omsk and Kolyvan, will desfile before you; and if you do not show me Michael Strogoff, you shall receive as many blows of the knout as men shall have passed before you.'

Ivan Ogareff saw that, whatever might be his threats, whatever might be the tortures to which he submitted her, the indomitable Siberian would not speak. To discover the courier of the Czar, he counted then, not on her, but on Michael himself. He did not believe it possible that, when mother and son were in each other's presence, some involuntary movement would not betray him. Of course, had he only wished to seize the imperial letter, he would simply have given orders to search all the prisoners ; but Michael might have destroyed the letter, having learnt its contents ; and if he were not recognised, if he were to reach Irkutsk, all Ivan Ogareff's plans would be baffled. It was thus not only the letter which the traitor must have, but the bearer himself.

Nadia had heard all, and she now knew who was Michael Strogoff, and why he had wished to cross, without being recognised, the invaded provinces of Siberia.

On an order from Ivan Ogareff the prisoners defiled, one by one, past Marfa, who remained immovable as a statue, and whose face expressed only perfect indifference.

Her son was among the last. When in his turn he passed before his mother, Nadia shut her eyes that she might not see him.

Michael was to all appearance unmoved, but the palm of his hand bled under his nails, which were pressed into them.

Ivan Ogareff was baffled by mother and son.

Sangarre, close to him, said one word only,

'The knout !'

'Yes,' cried Ogareff, who could no longer restrain himself, 'the knout for this wretched old woman — the knout to the death.'

A Tartar soldier bearing this terrible instrument of torture approached Marfa.

The knout is composed of a certain number of leathern thongs, at the end of which are attached pieces of twisted iron wire. It is reckoned that a sentence to one hundred and twenty blows of this whip is equivalent to a sentence of death.

Marfa knew it, but she knew also that no torture would make her speak, and that she was sacrificing her life.

Marfa, seized by two soldiers, was forced on her knees on the ground. Her dress torn off left her back bare. A sabre was placed before her breast, at a few inches' distance only. Directly she bent beneath her suffering, her breast was pierced by the sharp steel.

The Tartar drew himself up.

He waited.

'Begin !' said Ogareff.

The whip whistled through the air.

But before it fell a powerful hand stopped the Tartar's arm.

Michael was there. He had leapt forward at this horrible scene. If at the relay at Ichim he had restrained himself when Ogareff's whip had struck him, here before his mother, who was about to be struck, he could not master himself.

Ivan Ogareff had succeeded.

'Michael Strogoff !' cried he.

Then advancing,

'Ah, the man of Ichim ?'

'Himself !' said Michael.

And raising the knout he struck Ogareff across the face.

'Blow for blow !' said he.

'Well repaid !' cried a voice, happily concealed by the tumult.

Twenty soldiers threw themselves on Michael, and in another instant he would have been slain.

But Ogareff, who on being

struck had uttered a cry of rage and pain, stopped them.

'This man is reserved for the Emir's judgment,' said he. 'Search him!'

nounced the words, 'Well repaid!' was that of no other than Alcide Jolivet. His companion and he staying at the camp of Zabediero were present at the scene.



The letter with the imperial arms was found in Michael's bosom; he had not had time to destroy it: it was handed to Ogareff.

The voice which had pro-

'*Pardieu!*' said he to Blount, 'these are rough folk these Northern people. Acknowledge that we owe our travelling companion a good turn. Korpanoff or Strogoff is worthy of it. O, that was

fine retaliation for the little affair at Ichim.'

'Yes, retaliation truly,' replied Blount; 'but Strogoff is a dead man. I suspect that, for his own interest at all events, it would have been better had he not possessed quite so lively a recollection of the event.'

'And let his mother perish under the knout?'

'Do you think that either she or his sister will be a bit better off from this outbreak of his?'

'I do not know or think anything except that I should have done much the same in his position,' replied Alcide. 'What a scar the Colonel has received. Bah! one must boil over sometimes. We should have had water in our veins instead of blood had it been encumbent on us to be always and everywhere unmoved to wrath.'

'A neat little incident for our journals,' observed Blount, 'if only Ivan Ogareff would let us know the contents of that letter.'

Ivan Ogareff, when he had stanch'd the blood which was trickling down his face, had broken the seal. He read and re-read the letter deliberately, as if he was determined to discover everything it contained.

Then, having ordered that Michael, carefully bound and guarded, should be carried on to Tomsk with the other prisoners, he took command of the troops at Zabediero, and amid the deafening noise of drums and trumpets he marched towards the town where the Emir awaited him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

TOMSK, founded in 1604, nearly in the heart of the Siberian provinces, is one of the most import-

ant towns in Asiatic Russia. Tobolsk, situated above the sixtieth parallel; Irkutak, built beyond the hundredth meridian,—have seen Tomsk increase at their expense.

And yet Tomsk, as has been said, is not the capital of this important province. It is at Omsk that the Governor-general of the province and the official world reside. But Tomsk is the most considerable town of that territory, bounded by the Altai mountains, a range which extends to the Chinese frontier of the Khalkas country. Down the slopes of these mountains to the valley of the Tom, platina, gold, silver, copper, and auriferous-lead succeed each other. The country being rich, the town is so likewise, for it is in the centre of fruitful mines. In the luxury of its houses, its arrangements, and its equipages, it might rival the greatest European capitals. It is a city of millionaires, enriched by the spade and pick-axe, and though it has not the honour of being the residence of the Czar's representative, it can boast of including in the first rank of its notables the chief of the merchants of the town, the principal grantees of the imperial government's mines.

Formerly Tomsk was thought to be at the end of the world. It was a long journey for those who wished to go there. Now it is a mere walk where the road is not trampled over by the feet of invaders. Soon, even a railway will be constructed which will unite it with Perm, by crossing the Urals.

Is Tomsk a pretty town? It must be confessed that travellers are not agreed on this point.

Madame de Bourboulon, who stopped there a few days during her journey from Shanghai to Moscow, calls it an unpicturesque locality. According to her, it is

but an insignificant town, with old houses of stone and brick, narrow streets—differing much from those which are usually found in great Siberian cities—dirty quarters, crowded chiefly with Tartars, and in which are swarms of quiet drunkards, ‘whose drunkenness even is apathetic, as with all the nations of the North.’

The traveller Henry Russel-Killough is positive in his admiration of Tomsk. Is this because he saw in mid-winter, under its snowy mantle, the town which Madame de Bourboulon only visited during the summer? It is possible, and confirms the opinion that certain cold countries can only be appreciated in the cold season, ascertain hot countries in the hot season.

However this may be, Mr. Russel-Killough says positively that Tomsk is not only the prettiest town in Siberia, but is one of the prettiest towns in the world; its houses adorned with columns and peristyles, its wooden side-paths, its wide and regular streets, and its fifteen magnificent churches reflected in the waters of the Tom, larger than any river in France.

The truth is something between these two opinions. Tomsk, which contains twenty-five thousand inhabitants, is picturesquely built on a long hill, the slope of which is somewhat steep.

But even the prettiest town in the world would become ugly when occupied by invaders.

Who could wish to admire it then? Defended by a few battalions of foot Cossacks, who resided permanently there, it had not been able to resist the attack of the Emir's columns. A part of the population, of Tartar origin, had given a friendly reception to these hordes—Tartars, like themselves—and, for the time, Tomsk

seemed to be no more Siberian than if it had been transported into the middle of the Khanats of Khokhand or Bokhara.

At Tomsk the Emir was to receive his victorious troops. A festival with songs and dances, followed by some noisy orgies, was to be given in their honour.

The place chosen with Asiatic taste for this ceremony was a wide plateau situated on a part of the hill overlooking, at some hundred feet distance, the course of the Tom. The long perspective of elegant mansions and churches with their green cupolas, the windings of the river, the whole scene bathed in warm mists, appeared as it were in a frame formed by groups of pines and gigantic cedars.

To the left of the plateau, a brilliant scene representing a palace of strange architecture—no doubt some specimen of the Bokharan monuments, half Moorish, half Tartar—had been temporarily erected on wide terraces. Above the palace and the minarets with which it bristled, among the high branches of the trees which shaded the plateau, tame storks, brought from Bokhara with the Tartar army, flew about in thousands.

The terraces had been reserved for the Emir's court, the Khans his allies, the great dignitaries of the Khanats, and the harems of each of these Turkestan sovereigns.

Of these sultanas, who are for the most part merely slaves bought in the markets of Transcaucasia and Persia, some had their faces uncovered, and others wore a veil which concealed their features. All were dressed with great magnificence. Handsome pelisses with short sleeves allowed the bare arms to be seen, loaded with bracelets connected by chains of precious stones, and the little

hands, the finger-nails being tinted with the juice of the henna. Some of these pelisses were made of silk, fine as a spider's web; others of a flexible 'aladja,' which is a narrow-striped texture of cotton; and at the least movement they made that rustle so agreeable in the ears of an Oriental. Under this first garment were brocaded petticoats, covering the silken trousers, which were fastened a little above neat boots, well shaped and embroidered with pearls. Some of the women whose features were not concealed by veils might have been admired for their long plaited hair, escaping from beneath their various coloured turbans, their splendid eyes, their magnificent teeth, their dazzling complexions, heightened by the blackness of the eyebrows, connected by a slight line, and the eyelashes touched with a little black-lead.

At the foot of the terraces, gay with standards and pennons, watched the Emir's own guards, armed with curved sabres, daggers in their belts, and lances six feet long in their hands. A few of these Tartars carried white sticks, others enormous halberds ornamented with tufts of gold and silver thread.

All around over this vast plateau, as far as the steep slopes, the bases of which were washed by the Tom, was massed a crowd composed of all the native elements of Central Asia. Usbecks were there, with their tall capes of black sheepskin, their red beards, their gray eyes, and their 'arkalouk,' a sort of tunic cut in the Tartar fashion. There thronged Turcomans, dressed in the national costume—wide trousers of a bright colour, with vest and mantle woven of camel's-hair; red caps, conical or wide; high boots of Russian leather; and sabre and

knife hung at the waist by a thong. There, near their masters, appeared the Turcooman women, their hair lengthened by cords of goats'-hair; the chemisette open under the 'djouba,' striped with blue, purple, and green; the legs laced with coloured bands, crossing each other to the leathern clog. There, too—as if all the Russian-Chinese frontier had risen at the Emir's voice—might be seen Mandchoux, faces shaven, matted hair, long robes, saah confining the silken skirt at the waist, and oval caps of crimson satin, with black border and red fringe; and with them splendid specimens of the women of Mandchouria, wearing coquettish head-dresses of artificial flowers, kept in their places by gold pins, and butterflies lightly laid on their black hair. Lastly, Mongols, Bokharians, Persians, and Turkestan-Chinese completed the crowd invited to the Tartar festival.

Siberians alone were wanting in this reception of the invaders. Those who had not been able to fly were confined to their houses, in dread of the pillage which Feofar-Khan would perhaps order to worthily terminate this triumphal ceremony.

At four o'clock the Emir made his entry into the square, greeted by a flourish of trumpets, the rolling sound of the big drums, salvoes of artillery and musketry.

Feofar mounted his favourite horse, which carried on its head an aigrette of diamonds. The Emir still wore his uniform.

He was accompanied by a numerous staff, and beside him walked the Khans of Khokhand and Koundouge and the grand dignitaries of the Khanats.

At the same moment appeared on the terrace the chief of Feofar's wives, the queen, if this title may be given to the sultana of

the states of Bokharia. But, queen or slave, this woman of Persian origin was wonderfully beautiful. Contrary to the Mahometan custom, and no doubt by some caprice

studded with gems of the highest value. Under her blue-silk petticoat, striped with a darker shade, fell the 'zir-djameh' of silken gauze, and above the sash lay the



of the Emir, she had her face uncovered. Her hair, divided into four plaits, fell over her dazzling white shoulders, scarcely concealed by a veil of silk worked in gold, which fell from the back of a cap

'pirahn' of the same texture, sloping gracefully to the neck. But from the head to the little feet, incased in Persian slippers, such was the profusion of jewels—gold beads strung on silver threads,

chaplets of turquoisees, 'firouzehs' from the celebrated mines of Elbourz, necklaces of cornelians, agates, emeralds, opals, and sapphires—that her dress seemed to be literally made of precious stones. The thousands of diamonds which sparkled on her neck, arms, hands, at her waist, and at her feet might have been valued at almost countless millions of roubles.

The Emir and the Khans dismounted, as did the dignitaries who escorted them. All entered a magnificent tent erected on the centre of the first terrace. Before the tent, as usual, the Koran was laid on the sacred table.

Feofar's lieutenant did not make them wait, and before five o'clock the trumpets announced his arrival.

Ivan Ogareff—the Scarred Cheek, as he was already nicknamed—this time wearing the uniform of a Tartar officer, dismounted before the Emir's tent. He was accompanied by a party of soldiers from the camp at Zabediero, who ranged up at the sides of the square, in the middle of which a place for the sports was reserved. A large scar could be distinctly seen cut obliquely across the traitor's face.

Ogareff presented his principal officers to the Emir, who, without departing from the coldness which composed the main part of his dignity, received them in a way which satisfied them that they stood well in the good graces of their chief.

At least so thought Harry Blount and Alcide Jolivet, the two inseparables, now associated together in the chase after news. After leaving Zabediero, they had proceeded rapidly to Tomsk. The plan they had agreed upon was to leave the Tartars as soon as possible, and to join a Russian

regiment, and if they could go with them to Irkutsk. All that they had seen of the invasion, its burnings, its pillages, its murders, had perfectly sickened them, and they longed to be among the ranks of the Siberian army.

However, Jolivet had told his companion that he could not leave Tomsk without making a sketch of the triumphal entry of the Tartar troops, if it was only to satisfy his cousin's curiosity, so Harry Blount had agreed to stay a few hours; but the same evening they both intended to take the road to Irkutsk, and being well mounted hoped to distance the Emir's scouts.

Alcide and Blount mingled therefore in the crowd, so as to lose no detail of a festival which ought to supply them with a hundred good lines for an article. They admired the magnificence of Feofar-Khan, his wives, his officers, his guards, and all the Eastern pomp, of which the ceremonies of Europe can give not the least idea. But they turned away with disgust when Ivan Ogareff presented himself before the Emir, and waited with some impatience for the amusements to begin.

'You see, my dear Blount,' said Alcide, 'we have come too soon, like honest citizens who like to get their money's worth. All this is before the curtain rises, and it would have been better taste to arrive only for the ballet.'

'What ballet?' asked Blount.

'The compulsory ballet, to be sure. But see, the curtain is going to rise.'

Alcide Jolivet spoke as if he had been at the Opera, and taking his glass from its case, he prepared, with the air of a connoisseur, 'to examine the first act of Feofar's company.'

But a painful ceremony was to precede the sports. In fact, the

triumph of the vanquisher could not be complete without the public humiliation of the vanquished. This was why several hundreds of prisoners were brought under the soldiers' whips. They were destined to march past Feofar-Khan and his allies before being crammed with their companions into the prisons in the town.

In the first ranks of these prisoners figured Michael Strogoff. As Ogareff had ordered, he was specially guarded by a file of soldiers. His mother and Nadia were there also.

The old Siberian, although energetic enough when her own safety was in question, was frightfully pale. She expected some terrible scene. It was not without reason that her son had been brought before the Emir. She therefore trembled for him. Ivan Ogareff was not a man to forgive having been struck in public by the knout, and his vengeance would be merciless. Some frightful punishment familiar to the barbarians of Central Asia would, no doubt, be inflicted on Michael. Ogareff had protected him against the soldiers because he well knew what would happen by reserving him for the justice of the Emir.

The mother and son had not been able to speak together since the terrible scene in the camp at Zabediero. They had been pitilessly kept apart—a bitter aggravation of their misery, for it would have been some consolation to have been together during these days of captivity. Marfa longed to ask her son's pardon for the harm she had unintentionally done him, for she reproached herself with not having commanded her maternal feelings. If she had restrained herself in that post-house at Omsk, when she found herself face to face with him,

Michael would have passed unrecognised, and all these misfortunes would have been avoided.

Michael, on his side, thought that if his mother was there, if Ogareff had brought her with him, it was to make her suffer with the sight of his own punishment, or perhaps some frightful death was reserved for her as well as for himself.

As to Nadia, she only asked herself how she could save them both, how come to the aid of son and mother. As yet she could only wonder, but she felt instinctively that she must above everything avoid drawing attention upon herself, that she must conceal herself, make herself insignificant. Perhaps she might at least gnaw through the meshes which imprisoned the lion. At any rate, if any opportunity was given her she would seize upon it, and sacrifice herself, if need be, for the son of Marfa Strogoff.

In the mean time the greater part of the prisoners were passing before the Emir, and as they passed each was obliged to prostrate himself, with his forehead in the dust, in token of servitude. Slavery begins by humiliation. When the unfortunate people were too slow in bending, the rough hands of their guards threw them violently to the ground.

Alcide Jolivet and his companion could not witness such a sight without feeling indignant.

'It is cowardly—let us go,' said Alcide.

'No,' answered Blount; 'we must see it all.'

'See it all!—ah!' cried Alcide suddenly, grasping his companion's arm.

'What is the matter with you?' asked the latter.

'Look, Blount; it is she!'

'What she?'

'The sister of our travelling

companion—alone, and a prisoner! We must save her.'

'Calm yourself,' replied Blount coolly. 'Any interference on our part in behalf of the young

half hidden by her hair—passed in her turn before the Emir without attracting his attention.

However, after Nadia came Marfa Strogoff; and as she did



girl would be worse than useless.'

Alcide Jolivet, who had been about to rush forward, stopped, and Nadia—who had not perceived them, her features being

not throw herself quickly into the dust, the guards brutally pushed her.

She fell.

Her son struggled so violently that the soldiers who were guard-

ing him could scarcely hold him back.

But the old woman rose, and they were about to drag her on, when Ogareff interposed, saying,

'Let that woman stay!'

As to Nadia, she happily regained the crowd of prisoners. Ivan Ogareff had taken no notice of her.

Michael was then led before the Emir, and there he remained standing, without casting down his eyes.

'Your forehead to the ground!' exclaimed Ivan Ogareff.

'No!' answered Michael.

Two soldiers endeavoured to make him bend, but they were themselves laid on the ground by a buffet from the young man's fist.

Ogareff approached Michael.

'You shall die!' he said.

'I can die,' answered Michael fiercely; 'but your traitor's face, Ivan, will not the less carry for ever the infamous brand of the knout!'

At this reply Ivan Ogareff became perfectly livid.

'What is this prisoner?' asked the Emir, in a tone of voice terrible from its very calmness.

'A Russian spy,' answered Ogareff.

In asserting that Michael was a

spy he knew that the sentence pronounced against him would be terrible.

Michael had stepped up to Ogareff.

The soldiers stopped him.

The Emir made a sign at which all the crowd bent. Then he pointed with his hand to the Koran, which was brought him. He opened the sacred book and placed his finger on one of its pages.

It was chance, or rather, according to the ideas of these Orientals, God himself who was about to decide the fate of Michael Strogoff. The peoples of Central Asia give the name of 'fal' to this practice. After having interpreted the sense of the verse touched by the judge's finger, they apply the sentence, whatever it may be.

The Emir had let his finger rest on the page of the Koran. The chief of the Ulemas then approached, and read in a loud voice a verse which ended with these words,

'And he will no more see the things of this earth.'

'Russian spy,' exclaimed Feofar-Khan, in a voice trembling with fury, 'you have come to see what is going on in the Tartar camp. Then look while you may.'

(*To be continued.*)

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HER FACE'S APPEAL.